

JOHN VAN BUREN

POLITICIAN





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John Van Buren Politician

A Novel of To-day



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I

JOHN VAN BUREN strolled from his law-office on Main Street, Schenectady, to the New York Central Station. It was time for the accommodation train for Albany, and the June day was too bright and cheerful for him to sit longer alone. The need of looking up authorities at the library of the State Bar Association in the Capitol was a sufficient excuse, and there would be time to drop in at the Holland Club for a game of pool and a Regent's cocktail.

As the train stopped he stepped out on the platform. It was not the regular accommodation, but the first section of a series of special trains carrying the returning Tammany delegation back to New York from the National Convention. The special was made up of twelve sleepers and one private car; the sleepers were old and dingy, almost too worn out to be damaged further, while the private car was that of the vice-president of the road. There was no mistaking the contents of the train. The cars, except the private car, were placarded like a circus with muslin banners from end to end,

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announcing in bright-colored letters that this was the Tammany Hall Special, with the 2d, 7th, 8th, 19th and 21st districts on board. *

As the train waited, while the conductor was signing the order-book, Van Buren looked it over with great interest. A Democrat by inheritance and conviction, he had always taken an active part in local politics, both at the primaries and conventions and on the stump. But he had never seen a Tammany crowd except at one State convention at Saratoga, where he was an alternate seated in the rear of the convention hall, and some one had pointed out to him the grizzled boss sitting on one of the front aisle seats with the Tammany delegates in rows behind him. Like all country politicians, he knew of Tammany through the newspapers, especially from the cartoons, which had done more to fix his notions than the printed text. All that he had read was in opposition, and somewhat owing to the tendency of his legal training to look at both sides of the case, the fact that all he had heard of Tammany was bad led him to seek for the reasons for its strength and power, and to argue with himself that there must be another side to such an organization or it would not so long exist in strength.

"Schenectady," shouted a loud-voiced man decked with badges, and at his call the band in the last car struck up "It's Fourteen Miles from Schenectady to Troy." The loungers around the station gathered at the sound of the band, and the small boys of the neighborhood scrambled for the pennies and nickels thrown from the car windows. From out the cars came handfuls of cigars thrown to the

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older loungers, and a lot of empty bottles. The small boys more boldly climbed up the car steps to beg for badges like those pinned on the frock-coats of the passengers, a celluloid tiger's head with a blue-ribbon banneret labelled "Tammany Hall." The men on this car were as novel a sight to the Schenectady small boy as the circus. They wore either frock-coats or linen dusters with high silk hats, with an array of diamond studs and huge horseshoe scarf-pins. Many of them had been drinking, but they did not show the liquor in the manner of the Schenectadians on a drunk, but with much less disorder and noise and no sense of novelty.

"Hello, Van Buren!" a voice called out to him from the platform of the private car. "Come down to see the train come in?"

"I came down to take a train to Albany," replied Van Buren.

"Come up here; you are a Democrat, and I want to introduce you to some of my Democratic friends. The boys will be glad to see you. You may as well go as far as Albany with us. I will introduce you to the boss; it won't do you any harm, and it might do you good."

The speaker was an old political friend, Assemblyman Wilson, of Schoharie County, the member of the Democratic State Committee from the district which included Schenectady.

"What are you doing with this Tammany crowd?" asked Van Buren as he stepped on board.

"Mr. Coulter asked me to come back from the convention as his guest, and I am going down to the city for a few days. Better come along the

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whole way. You haven't any business to keep you this time of year. We will stop at the Hoffman and come back Sunday."

"I think I shall," said Van Buren. "I should greatly like to meet Mr. Coulter. I never saw him but once, and I have always been curious to know what kind of a man he really is. Politics in New York is different from what it is with us. They seem, somehow, to win oftener than we do, and I would like to find out how they do it."

The train had started before Wilson and Van Buren shook hands. They walked together into the main room of the private car. The occupants of this car were very different in manners and appearance from the frock-coated, diamond-studded crowd that had been passing nickels and cigars to the station loafers. Seated in a corner reading a French novel, Van Buren recognized a Harvard man, who had spent part of the fortune he had inherited to be elected to Congress. On the divan were two members of the Knickerbocker Club. A famous author was talking to the big contractor, a man whose father was a ditch-digger and shovelled ballast on the ties of the railroad of which his son is president. Playing dominoes at a little table were a district leader and a partner in one of the big department stores. There were no bottles visible, except some mineral water on the domino-table. The mayor of New York was smoking, occasionally exchanging a word with a justice of the Supreme Court, who was watching the domino game. He was noticeable only as being the most carefully dressed man in the car.

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Near the table sat a grizzly-bearded man, looking over telegrams through a pair of eye-glasses that kept falling off. He wore a dark-blue suit, double-breasted, and so closely buttoned that his drawn-in chin met his coat collar. His beard was gray in patches, his skin was a yellow-gray, and his eyes were a blue-gray. Sitting, he looked taller than standing, and more at ease. The squareness of the cut of the double-breasted coat added to the squareness of the head, and most of all to the jaw.

"The boss likes young men," said Wilson, as he led up Van Buren, "and he is trying to strengthen his power through the State." Mr. Coulter looked up rather listlessly as Van Buren was being introduced. When he heard the name his manner became cordial.

"Did I catch your name rightly—Van Buren?" asked the boss, with a pleasant smile, as they shook hands.

"Van Buren is my name."

"A good American name, and an historical one. Of course, you are a Democrat?"

"I am, indeed."

"I knew one of your family, a stanch Democrat, a great lawyer, and a great favorite in New York. I hope you will be able to follow in his footsteps."

"It won't be for want of ambition."

"What is your profession?"

"Law."

"Ever done anything in politics?"

"I was district attorney one term, and I have always tried to do what I could for the party."

"That's good. We need young men. In the

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city they come to us, but we don't seem to be getting them up the State. Why is it? Why don't you and Mr. Wilson here give us another assemblyman this fall, and a State senator next year?"

"To be frank with you, Mr. Coulter, we are losing our hold. Schenectady was a strong Democratic county, and it is drifting away from us. The men in the shops are Republicans, and while they are making gains, we do not even hold our young men. Somehow the Republican party has the name of being the American party and has the issues for the young men, and then money is coming in more and more at elections, and we don't have it. And, if you won't mind frankness, we country Democrats are held responsible for all the sin and iniquity charged to Tammany Hall. These legislative investigations hurt us with the church people, and the American cry is urged to oppose the so-called Irish domination of Tammany. With all respect to you, Mr. Coulter, Tammany is our heaviest load."

Van Buren checked himself, feeling that he was going too far, and was about to take advantage of the approach of others to turn away.

The boss stopped him. "Young man, what the Democratic party needs up the State is organization and aggressive tactics. Stand together and hit your opponents. Strike first, and keep on pounding. Keep them on the defensive. In politics the defensive loses. I have heard other up-the-State men talk like you. Join Tammany Hall and see for yourself what it is. Pay us a visit and study our methods. We want to carry the State this fall, and we should give our Democratic governor a Demo-

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cratic legislature. Whether we do it or not depends on you young men up the State."

For Mr. Coulter this was a long speech, and every one in the car within the sound of his voice looked with respectful curiosity on Van Buren, who, without noticing the attention Mr. Coulter's remarks had caused, replied:

"I thank you, Mr. Coulter. I shall be glad to avail myself of your kind offer. I have always regarded Tammany Hall as the most perfect political organization in the country. And I should regard it as a privilege to note the methods of it at first hand."


While this conversation was going on a short, thick-set man, with a mustache so shiningly black that it seemed to be dyed, but was not, and a diamond stud that looked too big to be real, but was, came into the room and walked over to where the boss sat. Assemblyman Wilson and he shook hands.

"Here is a man, Van Buren, who will show you the ropes—Judge Murphy, leader of the second district, where they can run seven Democrats for aldermen, and the Republican will be last at that."

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Van Buren," said Judge Murphy, beaming with pleasure at the recognition of his greatness by a rural assemblyman. "Glad to see you in my court. Any favors I can do for you or any of your friends, always glad to oblige."

"You couldn't be in better hands," added Mr. Coulter. "Take him along, judge, and show him how we get the young men with us."

II

Y this time Albany was reached, and while the engines were changing Van Buren got out and telegraphed to his mother that he had gone to New York and would not be back until Sunday. The rank and file swarmed out of the cars and made a rush for the afternoon papers and the results of the races. Horses, or "ponies," as they were called, were the subject of more comment than the convention, and the pedigrees and the performances of the race-track were matters of minute and accurate knowledge to these men, not one in a hundred of whom could have given the names of the presidents of the United States or the members of the cabinet.

Among the crowd in the station waiting-room Van Buren saw an old political friend of his father's, Senator Marlow, who now occupied the seat in Congress which Van Buren's father had filled before he resigned to go as minister to Germany under President Buchanan. With the senator was his daughter. Van Buren had met Mary Marlow before at occasional Albany dances, although he had never been in the Marlow house. Van Buren's mother was one of the Albany Schuylers, born in the old house on South Pearl Street, where the marks of Indian tomahawks are still visible on the

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balusters, and her Albany friends were of the old families fast dying out.

Van Buren sought to pay his respects to the senator. Miss Marlow bowed in recognition, while Van Buren was explaining his sudden visit to New York. It was the first time Van Buren had seen Miss Marlow by daylight, and he wondered why he had never before noticed how remarkable and strikingly beautiful was her red hair.

Returning to the train, Judge Murphy took Van Buren and Wilson back to his delegation. It was a contrast to the private car where Mr. Coulter and the aristocracy sat. This sleeper was turned into a free bar and poker-room. The smoking-room had a table-stakes game, and in the main body of the car there were four other poker games. On the unoccupied seats were sleeping men, obviously dreaming off the effects of too much dissipation. Sandwiches and beer occupied the window-sills, and the floor was covered with cigar stumps. The car needed fumigation. It was easy to understand why the Wagner company used its discarded sleepers for convention parties. The air was so heavy and stale that Van Buren was ready to follow Judge Murphy into his private state-room. Here the assemblyman from the second, the warden of the city prison, and the superintendent of the dumps, who comprised the inner circle next to the judge, were having a quiet game.

Wilson already knew Assemblyman Keegan, having met him frequently in Albany. The judge introduced everybody. "Let's have a bottle," he said, and one of the court officers, who went along as the judge's private attendant, brought out a quart of

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champagne and poured it into the tumblers filled with ice.

"Here's to you, assemblymen," said the judge, turning to Wilson, "and may there be many more like you in the next legislature to keep our boys company."

"Thank you, judge; if you would only spare us a few of your captains and send along a few lodging-houses we might do better," replied Wilson.

Van Buren noticed that Assemblyman Keegan did not touch the wine. Judge Murphy took his like soda-water, while Superintendent Finn seemed to think his was medicine, and it could easily be seen that he would have preferred a schooner of beer.

Van Buren had often heard of Judge Murphy. Indeed, it is likely that in those days Judge Murphy was the best-known jurist in the United States. In his early life he was a school-teacher, and all his salary went over the bar, with the result that he lost his place. Growing wiser, he went into the liquor business himself, with a small saloon on old Chatham Street, which became valuable and popular after the opening of Brooklyn Bridge. In that neighborhood it is necessary for every liquor dealer to be in politics. The excise law puts it into the hands of the police to blackmail him or close his place, and in self-defence a saloon-keeper with an all-night trade must be solid enough in politics to stand off the police captain who happens to preside there.

As Patrick Murphy rose in wealth he had two ambitions: one to be alderman and the other to have a whole house to himself. Both of these

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ambitions had been attained a few years before, but contentment did not follow and he next wanted to be a judge. This is the height of political ambition in the second district, that historic neighborhood where Paradise Park has supplanted Five Points and Cherry Hill keeps up the reputation for riots it acquired in the Revolution. The city prison is in the second district, and what greater glory could there be than to preside over the prison police court and favor one's friends and get even with one's enemies, for the major part of the district, at one time or another, appears in some capacity at the bar of police-court justice.

The opportunity had come at the last mayoralty election. Boss Coulter had offered a banner surmounted by a real tiger's head to the district giving his candidate for mayor the biggest majority. There was a close contest between the boss's own district, the mayor's district, and the second. Thanks to the district captained by Assemblyman Keegan, which returned a vote of 486 to 1, Judge Murphy won the banner and the stuffed tiger's head, which were proudly displayed in the club-house parlor. What more natural than that more substantial recognition should follow, and Alderman Murphy was one of the mayor's early appointments to the bench.

Judge Murphy did his best to live up to the high honor, which no one appreciated more or held higher. He ceased to wear checked clothes and always dressed in black broadcloth; nor did his ties ever vary from the white bow, always worn above a diamond stud as large as a three-cent

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piece. From his patent-leather shoes to his waxed mustache he was as immaculate as could be. His habits also changed. In his frequent visits of necessity to the saloons of his district, in several of which his savings and aldermanic accumulations were invested, he never took anything but Apollinaris Water. Of course he treated often and regularly, but in their presence the judge had never since his elevation to the bench taken any intoxicating liquor. At the district club and in the up-town cafés it was different.

Van Buren had seen many cartoons of Judge Murphy—the short, thick-set, square-shouldered politician of the comic papers, with his heavy, waxed, black mustache, his plastered hair, his rotund abdomen crossed with a heavy watch-chain and diamond charm, his fingers more ringed than a dowager's, and his apparel as many-colored as a circus poster.

It was all so novel. Somehow it reminded him of the fairy stories of his boyhood, and how he hoped some day one of the book fairies would come to him and take him around to where Jack the Giant-killer lived and show him the ogres. He hoped Judge Murphy would change the black broadcloth to loud checks, so that the resemblance would be accurate throughout. Then he would feel that he had at last really met a man who had always been to him as fabulous as Gog and Magog.

“Wake up, Van Buren,” Wilson interjected. “If you want to study real politics arrange with the judge to look after you. He is the winner that

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carries the tiger's head, and what he can't show you isn't worth seeing."

"I will be glad to do that very thing," said Judge Murphy. "This isn't election time, but it's politics every day with us, and there is always something doing or somebody being done, which is the same thing. Fill up your glass; don't be afraid of it. It's real."

Everybody except Assemblyman Keegan was consuming the wine like water. That was Judge Murphy's idea of the highest hospitality, and the district was proud of him for it. They thought all the more of him for his taking only mineral waters with them and keeping the other for his visitors.

Outside in the main body of the car the noises increased as the card-playing ceased through the constant interruptions of One-eyed Maloney and Dinky Dan—two privileged characters without visible means of support who had not missed a convention or a prize-fight in twenty years. Van Buren did not understand it. He had seen intoxicated men often enough before, but in Schenectady they did it differently.

Judge Murphy introduced Van Buren to the crowd. "Gentlemen, my young friend, Mr. Van Buren, the learned district attorney of Schenectady, is come among us and is now in our midst. You will all be proud to know him. He is one of us."

This was greeted with applause and a liquid health. Assemblyman Wilson did not need an introduction. He had spoken at the second district club-house the night the stuffed tiger's head was hung on the parlor wall, and he recognized most of

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those present as members of the committee of arrangements that night.

The daylight was growing dim and the Palisades were opposite the car windows when Van Buren realized that he had been drinking too much. He had never been in a crowd like this before, and he had lost track of his capacity, which a liberal college education had enabled him usually to gauge with accuracy, and, besides, champagne was neither his usual nor favorite beverage. The motion of the car became unpleasant and things began to fade and wobble indistinctly. Judge Murphy developed into the ogre of the fairy stories, not a ferocious ogre of our own times, but an amiable, friendly ogre who was going to give him the secret pass-word to enter the back door of the castle and carry off the beautiful maiden in a flying-machine, and be elected to the United States Senate, and live happily forever afterwards amid popular acclaim for his great speech against the trusts and their control over the tariff. He recognized the beautiful maiden, but what was she doing in the castle? and where had she met Judge Murphy? and why was Judge Murphy an ogre, anyhow? and then he dropped to sleep.

While he slept he had a curious dream. It was morning and the sun was rising. His arms changed to wings and he was testing them on their first flight. They were different from ordinary wings, for they had the power to carry him through anything. He had flown through the window without opening it, and the wings were carrying him into Albany right to Elk Street, where he flew easily through the walls of the Marlow house and into Miss

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Marlow's room. She had finished her bath and was dressing. Her purply red hair hung in a torrent below her waist. It was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen, more dazzling than the sun, and as he fluttered his wings the red strands blew to and fro.

Miss Marlow was not at all surprised to see him, and she took the wings as a matter of course.

"I expected you," she said.

"Come with me," he replied; "let us fly."

"I rarely fly before breakfast," she mildly remonstrated.

"It's such a pleasant morning," he pleaded.

"Well, but I must be back in half an hour," she consented.

He reached out his hands to take hers, but his hands were gone and he only fanned her with his wings.

"I should think you would prefer to have hands and arms," she remarked, with a smile.

"I should. I don't understand this at all."

"It is very simple. Everything is very simple if one doesn't complicate it. I have often wanted to fly. How am I to begin?"

Van Buren did not know what to say, and he awoke as the train stopped in the Grand Central Station.

III



SENATOR MARLOW was the leader of the Democratic party in the State. He had a speaking acquaintance with all young Democrats, towards whom he adopted an habitual avuncular attitude. The senator combined in one the sage and the politician. A lawyer by profession, and a successful one, he was a politician by instinct. Politics to him was the breath of life. Everybody and everything he viewed through political spectacles.

Born in Hudson, in the same county with Van Buren's ancestors, Daniel Marlow went to the public schools until he was fifteen and then helped around in his father's grocery store. In his school-days he was in politics; at the Sunday-school, when there was voting for the most popular teacher, he had stuffed the ballot-box by dropping in a lot of tickets upon which he got his eldest sister to write his teacher's name. The discrepancy between the money received at ten cents a vote and the total number of votes found in the box caused a Sunday-school scandal, but no one thought of implicating him, and even at the early age of twelve he had learned the value of silence and secrecy.

At the public school, where he was far advanced

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for his age, he organized a political machine and elected his followers to all the class offices, not going on the ticket himself. He was not popular, and he did not think his candidacy would help the ticket. But he manipulated matters so as to have the selection of the class orator left to a committee, and by securing friends of his on the committee he was made class orator and the feature of commencement day.

The politics of the ward centred around his father's grocery. In the rear of the store was a small room partitioned off, with a stove, chairs, and a demijohn. Here customers were treated, as was the custom in those days, and here evenings the Democratic workers of the ward would gather. Daniel Marlow learned at these meetings the harm of too much liquor when he saw his father cajoling the secrets from his associates with the aid of the demijohn. He noticed that when the supervisor of the ward and his father were alone his father encouraged the supervisor to fill his glass and only partly filled his own. Daniel then came to the conclusion, which he pursued in after life, that the less he drank the better.

After three years in the grocery store Daniel startled his father by announcing that he was reading law with Judge Coombs, and that there would be a vacancy in the store which his younger brother was old enough to fill. In Judge Coombs's office he divided his time between the routine law-books and the judge's private library. Judge Coombs was a Whig, and his library contained the Federalist Hamilton's writings, Webster's speeches, and the

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debates of the Constitutional Convention. He took the *Weekly Tribune*, and swore at Greeley's attacks on Seward. Daniel attended all the primaries, caucuses, conventions, and political meetings held by both parties. His father took the *Albany Weekly Argus*, which printed the leading Democratic speeches, and the *Weekly Tribune* told about the Whigs. Columbia County was generally Democratic, although the Whigs would carry it occasionally through Democratic factional fights, in which the old Van Buren element was still prominent. Daniel noted that the easiest way to win was to split the opposition vote, and that most men voted against something and to beat some candidate.

When he was twenty-one Daniel Marlow was admitted to the bar. The next day after he was sworn in as an attorney he packed his few law-books in a valise and set out for Albany. On his arrival he walked to the law-office of Senator Calder, the leader of the Democratic party in the State, and installed himself as office boy. How he was engaged Senator Calder could not recall. He fitted himself in and went to work. The work consisted of sitting in the outside office and looking after the callers who were rarely clients, but the county political leaders from all over the State. The senator had two inside rooms, one where his desk and library were and a little consultation room to one side, which reminded Marlow of the back room in his father's grocery. It had a stove and chairs and a closet with bottles, instead of the demijohn, on the shelf.

In this office Daniel Marlow had spent the sub-

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sequent years of his life. From office boy he became clerk; from clerk, assistant; from assistant, partner; and then, when Senator Calder's body was taken to the cemetery on the Esperance Hill overlooking the farm-house on Schoharie Creek, where he was born and where the Democratic majority to this day shows his handiwork, Daniel Marlow occupied the inner office and continued the consultations in the little room, and changed nothing, not even the Peter Calder on the tin sign on the outer door. His own name, Daniel Marlow, was on a similar tin sign under it. It was the one sentiment of Daniel Marlow's life.

His political power grew. Before he had been in Albany five years he was chosen district attorney. Senator Calder obtained him that nomination to beat a popular factional opponent for renomination. The only way the incumbent could be defeated was by Senator Calder making a personal matter of it and putting his prestige into the scale. He picked out his own assistant as being so close to himself that the delegates to the convention could find no excuse for not standing by him. That one term as district attorney was the only time Daniel Marlow's name ever appeared on a ticket to be voted for at the polls.

Twenty years went by before Daniel Marlow filled another public office. Those years were spent in building up a political machine as intricate and well fitted as the works of a watch. His correspondence and acquaintance extended to at least two men in every one of the three thousand election districts of the State, whom he could call by their first names,

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and with whom he conducted a correspondence. The necessity of this occupation made him the inventor of the manifold letter with the facsimile signature. Before there was such a thing as the type-writer he would have his clerk, who could imitate his signature so well that none but a bank teller could detect the difference, write to his adherents throughout the State whenever occasion needed. To this day, in rural neighborhoods, old farmers and store-keepers cherish among their valued possessions these letters signed Daniel Marlow, testimonials of the time when they were of importance in politics, and it would be a blow to them to know that hundreds of exact copies were simultaneously sent out. The county and district leaders always called on him on their way to New York, or whenever they had occasion to be at the State capital. The conferences took place in the little room. Every possible move on the political chess-board was here discussed, and the climax of the two decades of this incessant detail was the election in the face of a hostile apportionment of a Democratic legislature which, as its first act after its organization, made Daniel Marlow a senator of the United States for the State of New York.

During these years of politics Daniel Marlow's law practice grew without effort. He had to live, and the necessary money he acquired from his practice; that was the only reason he kept it up. Withal he was a good lawyer. His mental habit of looking at every twist and turn of a political situation made him the leading equity and constitutional pleader in the State. There was no

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subtlety in a case he could not turn to his advantage, no loop-hole which he could not make appear, and sincerely, too, as big as a barn door. The importance of small things was his political life. He needed no arithmetical calculations to tell him that a change of five votes to the election district would shift the political control of the State, and that it is the little things which decide the big events. Thus in the law he could see arguments invisible at a first glance, and the judges came to fear him, so adept was he in taking one point and enlarging it, as on a stereopticon screen, until it covered the whole case. Clients were always seeking him. He accepted those he pleased, according to his financial necessities, and charged them as he liked, and then refused further business until his fees were expended. Clients desirous of his services had learned that November, after election, was the best time to approach him with retainers, for every campaign left him in debt. The possession or accumulation of money had no attraction for him, which made it easy for him to be unbribably honest, and he could never understand the weakness and the avarice of his underlings who accepted bribes.

That was Daniel Marlow's weakness — his only weakness, perhaps, but a great and weighty handicap which kept him from full success. He could not understand or sympathize with the weaknesses of other men. He had never been intoxicated, except once when he deliberately drank too much whiskey out of curiosity to know the sensation, and was thoroughly disgusted with it. He smoked a cigar once; it made him sick and he never tried it again.

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He learned to play poker and won the first time he played. That did not interest him except as one way to make money, and rather hard work at that. He could not understand why men wasted time and thought on chess and whist, both of which he tried, when the greatest game in the world, politics, was open to all. No woman interested him, not even his wife. Sometimes he wondered what would become of his political leadership if women were allowed to vote, but he would dismiss that thought with the feeling that it would be time enough to meet such a situation when it arose.

His marriage was the one inexplicable event of his life. His wife was the daughter of Peter Calder; she was named Marcia, after Governor Marcy, her father's great friend. Her father never forgave her because she was not a boy and could not succeed to the political hegemony which he had established. She was a girl with a brilliant mind, which she inherited and in turn resented the inheritance. She hated being brilliant; she would have preferred to be humdrum and commonplace and happy, but she could not help herself. She was unable to keep from being clever and keen in thought and speech, addicted to the epigram habit, try as she might to break it off. Although she was good-looking and well mannered and well gowned, attractive in person, and, when she had herself in hand, charming in speech, her involuntary outbursts of sarcasm and her shafts of wit made her feared of men. Often after a ball or a dinner she would bewail to herself that no man liked to be alone with her. At the dinner-table every one

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admired and listened. The men regarded it a privilege to sit on either side of her, for in numbers there was safety, and she managed to scatter the arrows of her wit and ridicule so that no one should feel especially hurt. But few men could complacently retire from an hour's conversation with her alone. She could not help it. Try as she would to be flattering and to stroke man's mental fur the right way, she was sure to let something slip which rankled in his mind and caused him to avoid her. With all the public admiration and attention she received, no man ever had the temerity to propose to her; and little blockheads of girls without beauty or attractions married the men whom, try her best, she could never induce to be tender and loving, or even flirtatious.

Daniel Marlow was the first man she knew who was proof against her keen tongue. At first she was glad, for towards this shrewd, strong young man she felt a liking from the start. She met him at her father's office, where his seeming awkwardness in complying with a request brought forth one of the cutting comments which she no sooner made than regretted. Instead of the flush of injury or wrath which with others followed such incidents, she was surprised to see no trace of change in Daniel Marlow's face or voice. Could it be that she was understood at last, and that he knew she would rather the next instant have cut out her tongue to recall what she had said? It was years after before she reluctantly confessed to herself that both his seeming awkwardness and the ignoring of her sarcasm were but the habitual indifference

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which Daniel Marlow felt to everything not political.

About the time he was elected district attorney Marcia Calder decided to marry him. She had never made up her mind to marry any man before, although it often occurred to her that this man or that might be a possible husband, and she had done her best, in feminine fashion, to put them through their paces and to impress them with her desirability. The man had always fled, often in terror at the prospect of a life within daily sound of her sharp sayings.

They were a strange pair, these two. One evening he had dined with her and her father and they were talking politics. Marcia Calder was often present at these evening talks. The subject of discussion was the best way to dispose of certain scandals inside the party. Congressman Whiting, of the Mohawk Valley district, had been implicated in the public works frauds, and it was a question whether the party organization should try to hush the matter or what its attitude should be. Daniel Marlow's advice was: "Either stand by Whiting or put him out yourself and take the credit for repudiating him. Don't take a middle course."

"Whiting has always been one of my friends," said Mr. Calder. "His district is always with us."

"Stand by him for political reasons if you think best, but don't let personal friendship influence your political judgment."

"That would be easy for you, Mr. Marlow," commented Marcia. "I don't believe you ever had a personal friendship. Have you ever been any one's friend?"

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"It is safer not," gravely replied Daniel Marlow. "Friendship is as much out of place in politics as in a bank. As well might a bank president discount notes on friendship instead of collateral."

"Whiting will go under whether we stand by him or not," said Calder. "He has gone too far to prevent exposure."

"Then let us do the exposing and take credit for protecting the State against even our own thieves," argued Daniel Marlow. And it was done as he said, to the destruction of Congressman Whiting and the benefit of the party which elected Mr. Calder governor that fall on the reform issue.

Marcia Calder was the governor's daughter when she married Daniel Marlow. They had arranged the marriage in a business-like way, without sentiment or love-making. Her father gave them a house on Elk Street, where they lived and where Mr. Calder died shortly after his term as governor ended.

To them one child was born, a girl, named Mary by her mother. The girl grew up with her father; she was not a mother's child. She was her father's only pleasure and relaxation outside of politics. He had hobbies about children, and instead of the usual child's books and playthings he gave her the Bible, Shakespeare, and Milton, all with colored illustrations. From these she learned her alphabet and to read. Her father was her playmate; her first playthings were Noah's ark and the twelve apostles. Her boy dolls were named Tiglath-Pileser, Sennacherib, and Pul, after the kings of Assyria, and her girl dolls were Jemima, Keziah, and Keren-Happuch. Her private playground was her fa-

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ther's inner office, where she spent the great part of her time. When it came to teaching her, her father was the instructor. She would read Milton to him evenings, stumbling over the big words, and on Sundays he liked to have her read the chapters of names from the Chronicles and the pedigrees of the tribes of Israel. The book of Proverbs she learned by heart, and the wisdom of Solomon. She was a grown-up girl before she went to school. She had learned to speak German from the cook and French from her mother's maid. When she had read Shakespeare and Milton her father added Horace and Homer, which he had taught himself. He liked the sound of the words in the original text, Homer more than Horace, and the ocean descriptions by Ulysses most of all. Mary learned to read them aloud before she was eight years old. The words conveyed as much meaning to her as the genealogies of the Old Testament, and with a child's active memory she committed the Latin and Greek text with equal facility. Her knowledge of the geography and political divisions of the State of New York was minute, and this she acquired at her father's office; and the politics of the State she absorbed at play.

Mary Marlow grew up to know men, with few girl friends and no girl confidantes. Until she was too old to spend her time in her father's office, that was her favorite playground and the politicians of the State were her playmates. Congressmen, senators, assemblymen, judges, commissioners, and all the rest were her friends, and without knowing it she was a great aid to her father. Her presence

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in the inner office added a touch of the humanity which was so lacking in her father's dealings with his fellow-men, and her childish sympathy did much to make up for her father's hardness and the remorselessness of his political calculations.

When her school-days were over—and they were brief, for school was distasteful to her—she entered into her father's work and became a real assistant to him. In his office he had his secretary, his stenographer, and his clerks, but he trusted none of them. It might be that some day they would leave him to set out for themselves, or they might turn against him, and in the vicissitudes of political life he had seen how many turnings there are. So he guarded against any secret of his coming into their possession. His daughter was the only one in the world he trusted and confided in. His wife and he had never pretended a sentimental attachment, and the word love was used between them only when it became necessary in repeating the marriage ceremony. Both recognized their community of material interests and neither regretted their marriage.

Mrs. Marlow was in love with no other man, and she had a pride in her husband's power and success and a feeling of family inheritance in that she was the wife of her father's political successor. She made it a point to entertain extensively and to keep up a large domestic establishment. It impressed the politicians throughout the State. The successive governors, bishops, chancellors, and judges of the Court of Appeals were her friends irrespective of their politics. They attended her

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weekly dinners, spent their Sunday afternoons with her, and unconsciously were governed greatly by her views and influenced by her comments. This was Mrs. Marlow's life. While Mary was growing up with her father, Mrs. Marlow was developing in full scope the aptitude for political management which she had inherited and which her father had ignored and repressed. The keenness of her speech, which had mortified her so often when an unmarried girl, became something to be marked and quoted when she was the head of her own household.

As in politics, so in religious matters, Mrs. Marlow took a leading part, and made a clergyman protégé a bishop, who, as token of his fealty, regularly attended her Sunday evening high teas. She believed in distinguishing and observing the Sabbath day, and her Sunday evening dinner was not called dinner but tea, and no wine was served except one small bottle of champagne which the bishop had all to himself, this slight stimulant being recommended by the bishop's physician. The other guests had to be content with tea, coffee, and chocolate. To compensate for this alcoholic deprivation, the full gold dinner-service—plates, knives, forks, and spoons—was used at these Sunday evening teas, which led one of the favored guests, a State official who hastened later in the evening to the Holland Club to quench his thirst, to observe, "I've just come from the Elk Street Keeley cure, all gold and no rum!" This saying was repeated to Mrs. Marlow, who enjoyed it and rewarded its author with her high favor.

In the course of time Mrs. Marlow became a social as well as a political guide to the successive

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governors. If unmarried or widowed, the governor was always delighted to unload the social side of his administration on Mrs. Marlow's capable shoulders, and the wives of married governors were likely, sooner or later, to find safety and peace in the same course. This occasioned the only comment which ever ruffled Mrs. Marlow's complacency.

The President of the French Republic included Albany in the tour of his visit to the United States, and the official world arranged to give him a reception, a dinner, and a ball. An appropriation was made by the legislature and another appropriation by the common council, and a joint committee was appointed to look after the affair. The governor at that time was a widower, capable enough in politics but helpless in social matters, which his wife during her lifetime had entirely taken into her own hands. Mrs. Marlow naturally took charge. The French President arrived. Mrs. Marlow had arranged the menu and directed the luncheon. In the evening there was a dinner at the executive mansion, where Mrs. Marlow was taken in by the French President. She had picked out the prettiest girls in Albany and Troy for the members of the President's suite, and paired off the governor with the wife of the mayor and her husband with the wife of the chief judge.

After the dinner came the ball. The joint committees of legislators and aldermen had a big appropriation to expend and they spread themselves on this ball. Its fame was heralded through the United States, and the French President admitted that he had never seen anything like it before. The opera-

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house will seat three thousand people and occupies a block. The auditorium was floored over for the dancing, and the stage was divided into three large, elevated boxes, the centre one for the French President and the two others for the mayor and the governor. The adjacent streets were temporarily sheltered over to make a supper-room three blocks long, the biggest ever known, on one side a buffet and on the other the champagne-trough.

Senator Dorfinger, of Buffalo, who was the chairman of the joint committee, had been to an inauguration ball in Washington, and he told his colleagues he was determined to show the people of the United States that the State of New York could beat it. Ten thousand ball and supper tickets had been issued, the senators, assemblymen, and aldermen giving themselves twenty apiece for their respective districts, and every politician of any influence in the State getting two at least for himself. Allowing that half of the tickets would be used by women, Senator Dorfinger calculated that there would be five thousand men. The committee accordingly figured out that one thousand cases of champagne would allow two bottles per man, with a few over for any contingency. Being in the liquor business himself, Senator Dorfinger was an expert on icing and bar arrangements. He brought on workmen from Buffalo and had an ice-trough built three blocks long. It began on Washington Avenue and extended around the block to Washington Avenue again. To this matter Senator Dorfinger gave his personal consideration. The thousand cases of champagne were all in place in the

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ice by six o'clock in the evening. Every senator on the joint committee was allowed to appoint ten bartenders and every assemblyman and alderman five, thus gathering a representative body of bartenders from all sections of the State. There was a bartender to every ten cases of champagne, and every bartender was instructed to answer that no other beverage than champagne was obtainable.

The supper-room was filled soon after the ball opened. A procession was formed that slowly paraded around the block, vibrating between the buffet and the champagne-trough. Senator Dorfinger and his colleagues headed the supper parade and declared the supper-room formally open and dedicated to the French President in the name of the senate and the assembly of the State of New York and the mayor, aldermen, and commonalty of the city of Albany. Gradually the news of the champagne-trough spread through the ballroom and the men deserted the auditorium. The women were left in the gallery and the boxes, where the supper was served to them by the caterer's waiters. Two orchestras, one on the floor and the other on the balcony, alternated dance music and marches, the French President, the mayor, and the governor looking on from their elevated boxes, and the joint committee and their constituents celebrating in the supper-room.

Late in the evening the stragglers from the supper-room began to appear on the floor. Mrs. Marlow was seated in the governor's box overlooking the crowd. One of the exits from the supper-room was at the foot of the mayor's box. From this exit

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emerged a befuddled young Albanian who had entered the supper-room two blocks away at the Washington Avenue corner and was puzzled by the scene and splendor before him. It took him a while to get his bearings, but looking up he recognized the mayor, surrounded by the officers of the local militia. "There's Jimmy," he exclaimed. "He's all right." Passing along he confronted the French President and his staff in full uniform. "I know you, old boy. I recognize you from your picture." Then on to the governor's box where in the governor he greeted another familiar face. Next he saw Mrs. Marlow, sitting majestic in her black dinner-dress. This was a puzzler. Finally a light dawned on him and he inquired, "Where did you get Queen Victoria?" Mrs. Marlow saw nothing strange or unexpected in this question when the story was told her afterwards, but she never forgave the man who laughed when he told it. "I see nothing humorous in the incident," she icily remarked. "It was a perfectly natural mistake."

IV



AN BUREN was awakened the next morning after his trip on the convention train by Wilson. "Wake up, Van Buren, and come along. I made an appointment for you that you'll be sorry to miss. Judge Murphy asked us to breakfast with him. He will take us to the city prison court afterwards. I knew you wouldn't want to miss it. I am told it's better than vaudeville there when he dispenses justice."

Judge Murphy lived in one of the three private houses in the second district. The judge was asleep on the lounge in the parlor when Wilson and Van Buren rang the door-bell. He came to the door himself. "Come right in and make yourselves at home," he said, hospitably, shaking the hands of both of them at once. "Look over the papers and I'll be down in a few minutes." The judge reappeared shortly, his hair still wet, with a fresh collar and white lawn tie, showing that his morning toilet consisted of putting his head in a basin of water and changing his neckwear.

"The boys had quite a celebration when they got back to the district. You'd have better stayed with us. We had a little game which only broke up a couple of hours ago."

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"I'm afraid we couldn't keep up with you, judge," said Wilson. "We keep early hours in Cobleskill, or if we do happen to be up a little late we make up for it the next morning in bed."

"That wouldn't do here," replied the judge. "It's better to be an ambulance doctor than a district leader. Those ambulance fellows have swings off, but with a district leader in a district like this it's any and all the time. It's as bad at Saratoga in the summer as it is here. It's every hour of the day and every day of the year."

The door-bell rang and the judge went again to the door. A pock-marked, crop-haired young man talked a minute in the hall and then went away. "That's Small-pox Charlie," explained the judge on his return to the parlor. "He's captain of the Doyers Street district, where all the Chinks live. Some of them were a little close to the pipe last night and they'll be in court this morning. Come on down to breakfast. Don't mind me."

The bell rang again before they had gone downstairs. This time a voluble Hebrew appeared and was cut short in a long explanation by the judge, who said to him, "Oh yes, yes; needn't go over all that again." Then turning to his guests: "That's Sam Isaacs," explained the judge. "You wouldn't think that man's worth quarter of a million dollars, would you? Made it on Baxter Street in the clothing business. He's the original Isaacs. One of his barkers had a little mix-up with a neighbor. Nobody hurt. Those sheenies claw and spit, that's all, but they all turn up in court and make more noise than a monkey-show."

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Another ring and another visitor, this one elaborately dressed, with a diamond horseshoe pin, a heavy gold watch-chain and diamond charm, and clothes that were evidently made by a Fifth Avenue tailor. His face had the grayish tinge of a man who is habitually up all night. Judge Murphy frowned when he saw him.

"Too late, Tom. No use coming to me now. I won't stand."

"Make your own terms, Pat," came the reply. "It's before you this morning."

"I'm out of it, Tom. You can't play both ways from the middle."

Wilson and Van Buren were more curious about this caller than either of the others, but Judge Murphy said nothing and they did not like to ask.

In the breakfast-room Judge Murphy told the servant girl to answer the bell and tell all the callers he had gone to court. Van Buren had the curiosity to count the number of times the bell rang. It rang eleven times.

"Is it this way every morning, judge?" he asked.

"Well, not as bad as this every morning, but some days it is a great deal worse. About election time they pull the door-bell off, but I'm never in here then and they go to the club. You see, everybody wants something some time or another, and I'm the man they go to for it here. Politics is simply an exchange of favors. I do favors for the people of the district three hundred and sixty-four days of the year, and I ask them to return the favor on election day. That's why these reformers can't ever do anything in a district like this. There's ninety thousand men, women,

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and children in this district, and the women and children get votes for you as well as the men."

"That's as many as the whole population of Schenectady and Schoharie counties," said Wilson.

"I don't know anything about that," continued the judge. "But we've every nationality on the face of the earth. There is twenty-nine languages spoke by the children in the Mulberry Street school, and there's every shade of color—black, yellow, and green — Egyptians, Chinks, Turks, niggers, and Greeks, not to speak of the Dagoes, the Irish, and the Dutch. There is representatives of every downtrod and oppressed people, and some of them so used to being downtrod and oppressed that it's the only way to treat them. They wouldn't understand anything else. They would think you was afraid of them. There's one house on Mulberry Street has over two thousand people in it. It's full of families that live in one room and take boarders. Why, these googoes can't talk to people even. They talk different English, let alone any other language. My district captains know every man, woman, and child in their district, and can talk to them, too. And they're with them three hundred and sixty-five days to the year. How are you going to get them away? If any of them is a little behind in his rent, or wants a bucket of coal, or a loaf of bread, or if the husband is on the island, who is there to look after them except our people? It isn't those reformers who come down here in October and tell us how much better they are that bothers me any; it's to keep our own people satisfied and straight. They can't beat Tammany from the outside. When Tammany's

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beat it's her own people that does it, because they're sore and want to down somebody. But they keep quiet about it, and they ain't much on pronunciamientos and that sort of thing anyhow, and these rubber-tongued googoos throw a front that they did it all and get all the fat offices."

Before the judge had finished this oration they were seated at the dining-room table down-stairs in the basement facing the street. The house was of the old East Side style, high stoop, three stories, dining-room and kitchen in the basement, the parlor and the judge's office on the first floor, and bedrooms up-stairs.

"Here comes my morning's morning!" exclaimed the judge, dropping the topic they were discussing as the servant girl came into the room bearing on a large platter a pickled pig's head, a quart bottle of champagne, and a big pitcher containing chipped ice.

The judge poured the champagne into the pitcher, and with an admiring eye and deft hand revolved it around and around until it seethed, when, with an air of contentment, he placed the pitcher to his lips and slowly let it gurgle down his throat until the last drop disappeared. Then with a grunt of satisfaction he placed the empty pitcher on the table.

"This is my remedy to get rid of a head after a night of it," said the judge. "You know about 'the hair of the dog.' I find it very effective. Years ago I began with a bath and Apollinaris. I am afraid I'll wind up with two quarts of champagne and two pickled pigs' heads." He fell to and with gusto ate the entire pig's head. "Now," he wound up, "I feel fresh and ready for a good breakfast."

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They had hardly begun when the daughter of the judge came in to join them. She looked very pretty in a neatly fitting dark-brown suit.

"How is my little darling this morning?" said he, and then, recalling his guests, he introduced her to Wilson and Van Buren.

"Well, papa," said Miss Murphy to the judge, as they were eating their breakfast, "I want you to tell me now what kind of a time you have had."

"The same old kind of a time," he replied, "the same old programme."

"Cheers and champagne, I suppose, and then champagne and cheers, then more champagne and cheers?"

"That was the programme precisely," answered the judge, laughing. "If you were a young man what a politician I'd make of you."

"If I were a young man, I'd let politics and politicians severely alone," she answered, with a proud and half-defiant toss of her head.

"And why?" asked Van Buren.

"I see hundreds of politicians," she replied, "who come here to see papa, but there is not one in a hundred I would care ever to see again. They seem to be a bad lot. Every trade has its tricks, they say, but politics, as far as I can see, is all tricks."

"You don't mean to say your father is tricky," broke in the judge.

"I mean, papa, they are all tricky but you," was her reply, with a smile, and, turning to Van Buren, she asked, "Now tell me, really, Mr. Van Buren, did you like the crowd and the champagne and the cheers?"

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"To be frank," was Van Buren's answer, "I would have liked it better if it had been all cheers and no champagne."

"It is astonishing how people differ in their views," interrupted the judge. "I would have liked it much better if it had been all champagne and no cheers. Mr. Van Buren is young yet, and I think he will become an apt pupil if he only follows in my footsteps."

"I hope Mr. Van Buren won't follow in your footsteps so far as to have to eat a pickled pig's head in the morning."

"It's clear, my daughter," retorted the judge, with a broad grin, "that you don't understand why I eat a pig's head in the morning."


"I supposed it was to counteract the cranial enlargement," was her laughing response.

"Not at all," explained her father. "It's because two heads are better than one."

"Even if one is a pig's head?" added the daughter, interrogatively, and laughing heartily at her own joke.

The breakfast finished, Miss Murphy went up to the parlor for her morning's practice on the piano, and, looking at his watch, the judge said it was time for them to start.

V

UDGE MURPHY was holding court at the city prison. Van Buren had never before been inside this gray granite structure, with its wide and dirt-begrimed steps and massive, dark, and dismal-looking pillars in front, the old gallows yard in the rear. Its oppressive atmosphere chilled his spirits as he entered the vestibule.

When the judge took his seat the court policemen began hustling the line of prisoners from the pen. Judge Murphy disposed of them as fast as they appeared. They got ten days before the accusing policeman had finished saying, "Found drunk on the Bowery." The exceptions were the men with G. A. R. buttons and a few whom the judge knew. Judge Murphy had joined the Sixty-ninth Regiment when a young man and had served the last few days of the war. He was proud of his G. A. R. button, and so well was his weakness for G. A. R. buttons known that a tough who had the price would hire a G. A. R. button for a dollar from the collector for the court squad. This did not happen as often as might be supposed, for few men of this character who have money get as far as the police court. A dollar is a large sum on the Bowery. It means ten nights' lodging, fifty meals at the St.

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Andrew's stand. The button men and the few individuals whom the judge had met politically were discharged with some of the witticisms for which the prison reporters had made the judge famous. The majority of the sayings credited to the judge were invented by these reporters, but he occasionally was the author of one, and all the reporters knew that he would stand sponsor for any they chose to invent.

Accustomed to the methods of country courts, where even a man accused of disorderliness would have an extended hearing if desired, Wilson and Van Buren looked with new wonder at the celerity with which the judge went through his business. In less than an hour forty-seven cases were heard and disposed of.

"I admire the expedition with which you transact business, judge," said Wilson.

"I hold the record," replied the judge, proudly "I have disposed of one hundred and four cases in one hour, hearing both sides. You don't need to hear much. Nobody with money or a pull gets before me in this class. If he has money he can fix the policeman or they will take it away from him at the station-house and turn him loose. If he has a pull he will work it with the police. If he appears in the pen it means he has no money and no friends. I can tell by looking at him whether he is an "habitual" or not. The old rounders I keep sending up over and over again. They don't mind it. They sober up at the expense of the city, and if it wasn't for their occasional vacations on the island they would turn up in the morgue that much sooner."

After the rapid disposal of these characters a

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batch of peddler cases was heard. The defendants were Greeks or Italians charged with standing their pushcarts too long in one place or not having their licenses renewed on time. They were fined one dollar apiece.

"I would like to discharge them all," said the judge to Wilson, "but I don't want any more friction with the police. It's hard enough to get along with them now. Of all leeches and blood-suckers, the New York police are the worst. You saw those peddlers. They fell behind giving up, and here's the result. All those fellows give up a quarter a day to the police, or they are arrested on some charge. Up the State you fellows read about it and blame Tammany. Do you think any politician would stand for that? He couldn't live over one election. What we want from those fellows is their votes, not their quarters. Don't you know that any man big enough to be a leader has bigger opportunities than that? Whatever they say about me (and there's plenty of it, I'm not denying), I never made a cent out of a peddler or a woman, and you take my word for it the women and the peddlers and the street stands and bootblacks and all that kind of money are police graft. It sticks there. We are after their votes."

Next came a batch of street women. In the majority of cases the arresting policeman's memory was weak and he admitted that the arrest was made on suspicion. All these were necessarily discharged for lack of proof. After six or seven policemen were unable to testify to any overt act, Judge Murphy lost his temper.

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"You're all discharged," he said. "I won't stand for this. I want you all to know that this court won't be a collection agency. After this, any woman locked up overnight will be regarded as sufficiently punished. You women, the next time you are arrested, don't give bail."

"There's more of it!" exclaimed the judge to Wilson and Van Buren. "The police scoop in these street-walkers once a week. The rate is five a week. If they don't pay it they are taken to Chestnut Street, and it's put up a V for a bond or go down-stairs for all night, and look out for a trip to the island in the morning. Some of the higher police officers stand in on the bond money. What am I to do? I can't manufacture evidence against them, and I wouldn't if I could. Tammany gets the blame for it, but it isn't us, it's the police."

"Why doesn't Tammany stop it?" inquired Van Buren. "Tammany controls the city government. Can't you put an end to police blackmail? Aren't most of the force Tammany appointees?"

"Young man, if we had a newspaper in New York that would print plain facts you people up the State would know better. Every time anybody who ever belonged to a Tammany club gets in trouble it's always printed that he was 'A prominent Tammany politician.' You would think Tammany was a church the way the newspapers go on every time a Tammany man goes wrong and is caught at it. D'ye ever hear of a Republican doin' a second-story job or making a touch, or of a googoo shovin' a check or pushin' in some guy's nose or crackin' his slats? No. He's either Tammany or his politics

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ain't printed. Let me tell you that almost all top grafters are Republicans. There's the Tenderloin—you've heard about that. That's a strong Republican district, and there has never been even a Tammany alderman there. Then the Red Light district—did you ever hear of Barney Rankins or Johnny O'Toole or Johnny Blenham? They were the leaders of this other banner Republican district. Then there is Greene and Mercer and Third streets, where they have the French shows, another Republican district. Who runs the Black and Tan? A Republican election-district captain. Four-fifths of the crooks is Republican. They think it gives them tone, and nobody wants to throw a respectable front more than a top crook."

There was a lull in the court proceedings after the routine cases had been disposed of, and Judge Murphy continued his remarks about the police.

"We get the blame of the police. Maybe we deserve it for ruinin' a lot of fine young men by puttin' 'em on the force. Puttin' them on is one thing, holdin' them or gettin' them off is another. The way to spoil a good worker is to put him on the force. Put him on the docks or on the streets or the pipes, or anywhere else, and you hold him. He's got to be with you to keep his job. Put him on the force and he can snap his fingers at you, for there's no way of gettin' him off if his captain stands by him, and it isn't long before he learns to work for the captain's graft instead of for the organization."

"But doesn't Tammany control the police board?"

"Naw!" long drawn out. "The dubs at Albany

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is what the comish looks after. There is a board that they call non-partisan, one Tammany man, one mongrel Democrat, and two Republicans who are after what there is in it. Commissioner Mahoney, the Tammany man, is the only one of the lot on the level. He's worn himself out makin' a fight to stop holdin' up the liquor people. The liquor people were with us, and all they asked was to be let alone and not have to give up. Mahoney has his hands full trying to protect them. Under the last reform administration every liquor dealer had to put up five a week, the same as if he were a street-walker, besides a Christmas present to the captain's wife and free booze to the force. Tammany has broke that up, and Mahoney's made a lot of enemies doin' it. He was in a fair way to succeed Coulter, but the police will do him. They can down anybody. The two Republicans are real business men in politics. They're the genuine article. One price, no discounts and no bargain days. All their appointments are sold—\$300 for an appointment, \$750 for the arrow on the sleeves, \$2000 for a sergeant, \$12,000 for a captain, and as much more as they can get. The quarter of the appointments that comes to Mahoney—for the appointments are divided into quarters, like pie—Mahoney uses to strengthen the organization. The mongrel Democrat's the worst. His clerk is a regular auctioneer. He's a holdover and won't be reappointed, and all there is in it is what he's after."

The clerks had finished their papers in all the minor cases and the little opium matter came up. Van Buren recognized Small-pox Charlie on a back seat.

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A row of Chinamen were brought out from the pen and arraigneded on the charge of running an opium joint. The complaining policeman stated that he had arrested the men in a rear tenement in Doyers Street, near the Chinese Delmonico's, in the act of making and smoking opium pills. A number of pipes were seized and offered in evidence. The judge took a hand in the examination.

"What did you see these defendants do?"

"They were lying around the room on bunks, some smoking, some making pills, and the others talking."

"What ones were smoking and making pills?"

"I can't say which were which, but they were all there."

Here the regular counsel of Chinatown, a rotund prison lawyer, interposed.

"Your honor, I move for the discharge of the prisoners. The officer fails to state who were committing overt acts. It is no crime to lie on a bunk and talk."

"Prisoners discharged," ruled the justice.

"What right had the policeman to arrest everybody?" asked Van Buren, his experience as district attorney contrasting New York and Schenectady police methods. "Why didn't he arrest only those he could testify against?"

"Oh, they just took 'em all in. Had a little difference with Captain Flynn at Mulberry Street over their assessment. These Chinks hate to give up; they'd rather keep on the move."

The Baxter Street assault case followed and would have taken all day had the judge allowed the wit-

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nesses to testify. There were two benches of eager witnesses.

"How many witnesses have you?" Judge Murphy asked the complainant.

"Nine, your honor," replied a Hebrew with scratched face and missing patches of beard.

"How many witnesses have you for your man?" turning to Isaacs.

"Ten, your honor."

"The majority rules. Case is dismissed."

This was greeted with laughter throughout the court-room, and all the reporters took notes. It was remarks like these and many others the reporters chose to invent that made Judge Murphy famous.

A routine burglary case took five minutes. The complainant was a Bowery store-keeper. The defendant had been caught in the store.

"Held in two thousand dollars bail for the grand jury."

"This is the first thing I've seen here that reminds me of anything in my experience," whispered Van Buren to Wilson.

A highway-robbery charge, the complainant being a drunken sailor, was disposed of in the same manner.

A policy case came next. Van Buren recognized the judge's well-dressed caller standing near the policy man's lawyer. A policeman testified to making the arrest in the rear of a cigar store, and produced policy slips and manifold-books found on a table at which the prisoner was seated. A woman testified that she had bought policy from the de-

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fendant and complained to the mayor. The reason was that her husband spent all his earnings playing policy and she had complained before to the police, but the captain told her there was no evidence.

The defendant's lawyer undertook by cross-examination to attack the character of the woman.

"None of that," interrupted Judge Murphy. "The prisoner is held in a thousand dollars bail for the grand jury. I won't stand for policy. It's robbing the poor of pennies. You policy people are no good. I've seen too much of the harm you do. You ought to be hung."

The morning visitor flushed at this and went over to the bond clerk to give bail.

VI



AFTER lunching with Judge Murphy, Wilson and Van Buren took a Fourth Avenue car. Judge Murphy said he would follow them, as he made it a point to be at Tammany Hall every day between three and four o'clock.

"It is always well to keep in evidence," he observed, sagaciously. "Politics is a trade with short memories, and out of sight's soon forgotten."

Getting off at Fourteenth Street, Wilson and Van Buren walked towards the large, square, brick building on the north side of the street near the old Academy of Music, known as Tammany Hall.

"Wait a minute," said Van Buren. "Let us cross the street. I'd like to have a whole view. It has a sort of impressiveness I don't know how to classify. There is the balcony above the entrance columns: you might imagine a great orator there stirring the public conscience, a great statesman expounding to the people the policy of his party. What a forum! What opportunities and possibilities! How democratic the plain bricks, the massive, square effect!"

"You are from the country, Van Buren," laughed Wilson. "Haven't you ever been in New York before? Better look out or one of the ordinance squad

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will be taking you in for sprinkling hayseed on the sidewalk."

Passing up the entrance steps, Van Buren found himself facing a broad flight of stairs rising to the general meeting-room, with a smaller stairway on the right descending to the basement, and entrance doors to other rooms on both right and left. The door to the left was closed, that to the right was open. Men were passing in and out.

"Mr. Coulter is inside at his desk," explained Wilson. "He has office hours as regular as any other business man or financier. When he is in the city you will find him here from one o'clock to three or four, and during those hours he is the most accessible man in New York. Anybody, rich or poor, day laborer, merchant, banker, beggarman, or thief can call and say what he wishes. Indeed, Mr. Coulter encourages workingmen to call. He says he can learn more of the trend of politics and the strength of proposed candidates from a street-car driver than a bank president. The room on the left is where the executive committee meets. It is seldom used except during the campaign. Down-stairs is a hall for the committee on organization, which has about a thousand members, approximately as many as there are election districts. In the basement also is a room for the old Columbian Order or Tammany Society, a secret society founded shortly after the Revolution as a democratic benevolent organization to oppose the aristocratic tendency of the Society of the Cincinnati. Tammany Hall, the political organization, is nothing but a body of men who, by the tolerance of the Columbian Order, meet in the hall

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which the Columbian Order owns. The Columbian Order could turn Tammany Hall over to the Republican party if it wished, and, indeed, it has had many Republicans among its members—Roscoe Conkling, for instance.”

Entering the doors to the right, Van Buren found himself in a large, high-ceilinged room, with two big windows facing Fourteenth Street and receiving the afternoon sun. The room was large. The farther end was partitioned off with folding doors, which stood wide open. In the main room were tables and fifty or sixty chairs in rows along the walls, which were occupied by a waiting crowd. Other men were standing around or sitting on the tables, many of them smoking. The conversation was low and subdued and the hand-shaking was incessant, for everybody seemed to consider it necessary to shake hands with everybody else, and the usual salutations of “Pleasant day,” “Good-afternoon,” “Fine weather we are having,” were accompanied with a hand-shake and a proffered cigar, if either one was not smoking. Every little while everybody looked in through the folding doors to see whether one of the two occupants of the chairs behind the large, flat-topped desk was getting ready to give some one else his seat.

Van Buren looked at the scene with intense interest. He had read of the courts of St. James and Versailles, and somehow this recalled them. There was such an atmosphere of deference, of restraint, of rigid etiquette at once obvious and unconscious, such a straining desire to please and to acquit one’s self well, and the conversation was all in low tones, almost in whispers.

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"Aren't those folding doors ever closed?" he asked Wilson. "Doesn't Mr. Coulter want privacy at times?"

"Never when I've been here. I am told those doors have not been closed since Mr. Coulter became boss. Everybody can see who is talking to him. That's one thing which enables him to dispose of so much business; whoever occupies that chair next his knows that fifty men are impatiently waiting for him to get through and vacate. Then all the other men know it is not Mr. Coulter who is taking up their time keeping them waiting, but the man who sits and keeps on talking."

Man after man in quick succession took the chair beside Mr. Coulter. There was no hand-shaking there. As one man got up another sat down; as soon as the new man sat down he began talking at Mr. Coulter's ear. As well as Van Buren could observe, Mr. Coulter was oblivious of the coming and the going. His face never moved. His right ear turned towards the changing chair, he looked vacantly at a corner of the ceiling, occasionally dropping his gaze to his thumbs which extended upward from his clasped hands. When the man in the other chair talked over a minute or two Mr. Coulter twiddled his thumbs in impatience. He might as well have been an image except for the change of gaze and the twiddling thumbs. After the other man had talked and talked until he stopped Mr. Coulter evidently said something. His lips moved, and he even sometimes looked at the man in the other chair for the few seconds it took him to speak, only to return his gaze to the far-off ceiling

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corner. Van Buren could not hear the sound of his voice, but he noticed that the chair promptly had a new occupant after Mr. Coulter's lips had stopped moving.

Once the occupant of the other chair continued to talk after Mr. Coulter had spoken; he might as well have talked to a wooden image. Mr. Coulter paid no more attention to him, and soon realizing, from the murmur in the other room, the breach of etiquette he was committing, the business man—for every politician knew better—hurriedly departed. He had had a full hearing before the highest tribunal. He had promptly received a decision, and what else was left? That was all anybody received, high or low, district leader, justice of the Supreme Court, or day laborer. Had he gone to the State Court of Appeals at Albany, or the United States Supreme Court at Washington, he would have received no more than a decision, and he would have had to expend hundreds or, much more likely, thousands of dollars for lawyers, briefs, printed books on appeal, and other disbursements. He would have had years of anxiety and delay, and would have received nothing more at the end, perhaps, than permission to start over again in the lowest court.

The men who came to Mr. Coulter at Tammany Hall were of the type of the famous East Side jurist who asked the President of the United States, "What is the Constitution between friends?" when the President was explaining why he would not sign a private bill because of its unconstitutionality. These men had no understanding or patience with the technicalities and delays of the law, or the

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red tape of governmental affairs, or the dignity of statesmen. Their mental attitude may be likened to another anecdote of the same jurist. Having been sworn in after his election to the House of Representatives, he sauntered over to the Senate, and seeing the frigid Senator Evarts in his seat, slapped him on the shoulder, and said:

"I saw your motto, senator, in one of the Sunday papers—'The eagle who catches no flies.' That was not the way it read, because it was in Latin, but a friend of mine told me that is what it meant. I like the idea, and I am having one made for me that I'll have put in the *Congressional Directory*. Mine 'll be, 'No flies on me.'"

"You see one reason why Mr. Coulter is strong," continued Wilson to Van Buren. "He attends to business and disposes of matters promptly and decisively, and he keeps his word."

"Why, those are the qualities I look for in the head of a railroad or a factory or a bank," replied Van Buren, "not from a politician."

"Haven't you learned yet that politics in New York is a business and requires business methods to succeed? That is the reason there is, and always will be, a boss. What dividends would a railroad pay if the stockholders had to be called together and consulted on every proposition from the building of a culvert to the appointment of a new track-walker or a car inspector? There is no difference between the board of directors of a big corporation and the executive committee of Tammany Hall, except that the members of the executive committee give more time and atten-

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tion to their business than the average directors. Every store or bank or business of any kind has to have a head, some man of executive ability to decide quickly, to manage its affairs. What is he but a boss, and I shouldn't wonder if the directors and presidents of the average railroad steal quite as much in proportion from the public, and maybe from their stockholders, as do Mr. Coulter and his executive committee."

"I never thought of that before."

"Do you recall the names of the committee who managed the campaign of a recent fusion candidate? One member was the head of a large mercantile house which made its fortune by custom-house frauds and had enough influence when it was found out to compromise with the government for about ten per cent. of what it stole. The chairman inherited his money from his father who bribed the board of aldermen and secured an original franchise. Another member is a manager of the real estate of a rich church and has no scruples to lease its property to gamblers and worse. Another member makes a specialty of fitting up disorderly houses. The blackmail of saloon-keepers by the police was never known until captains made by a reform police board invented it to secure another source of revenue to pay for their promotion. Protection is never so high as under a reform administration, for more men have to be fixed and there is no central regulating power."

"But aren't the reformers men of more education and standing?"

"Yes, but they do not understand the people."

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Take a little illustration from an incident in Judge Murphy's district last fall. Sage McCarthy, the junk man of Paradise Park, had registered and voted the straight Tammany tickets since the Know-nothing days, for he was one of the first Irish immigrants. He had faithfully attended every primary and every election. He died of the natural weakness of old age just the Sunday before election. The funeral took place on election day, after the rush of the early morning voting was over. The funeral procession solemnly started from the tenement where the McCarthys lived over the junk-shop in the basement. In front of the polling-place the hearse and the carriages stopped. Patrick McCarthy, the eldest son, who had voted on his own name early in the morning, stepped out of the mourners' carriage, and while the crowd around the polling place reverently bared their heads out of respect for the dead, Patrick went in and, imperturbed, voted the straight Tammany ticket on his father's name. No Republican inspector or watcher dreamed of challenging his vote, but if one of those Fifth Avenue reformers had been there he would have had Patrick, Junior, arrested."

The crowd had thinned out somewhat when Mr. Coulter, looking over those remaining in the main room, saw Wilson and Van Buren. He left his desk and, walking out to where they sat, cordially shook hands with them. "Glad to see you here, Mr. Van Buren," he said. "Is there anything I can do for you? Mr. Wilson is an old friend of ours. He is going to address our Fourth-of-July celebration next week. If you are staying in the city then we

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should be glad to have you with us. Your father was one of the honored friends of our organization."

Van Buren was naturally gratified at the attention.

"I shall be pleased to accept your invitation, Mr. Coulter. I called only to pay my respects. I have learned a great deal to-day. Politics is very different down here from what it is up there with us."

The men remaining in the room looked with envy at this marked token of consideration, and the door-keeper bowed as Wilson and Van Buren, having said good-afternoon to Mr. Coulter, turned and walked out. They met Judge Murphy coming in.

"Let us walk up to the Democratic Club," said Wilson, "and take dinner and spend the evening there. That will make a crowded day for you and show you the full scale of the organization's daily life."

VII



HE two walked up Irving Place to Gramercy Park and stopped to look at the house Governor Tilden built, one of the fine mansions of New York in its day and now a fashionable boarding-house.

"I remember the governor dining at our house when I was a small boy," said Van Buren. "My father was rather with the anti-Tilden wing of the party, though of course he always supported the governor after he was nominated. One day my father took me to Albany, and we called on the governor at his office in the old Capitol and took lunch with him at the old executive mansion on State Street. How mysterious he was! He talked in whispers, and gave you the impression that everything was of vast importance and must be kept secret, and that he paid you a great compliment and showed his confidence in you by whispering that it was cloudy and looked like rain. I remember that after an interval of silence and evident deliberation as to whether my father could be trusted, the governor leaned over the table at luncheon and whispered, 'The prospects are bright, senator; the people are with us.' At once he shrank back as if he had said too much. A more outspoken and direct man would have taken his seat as President."

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From Gramercy Park they walked over to Fifth Avenue and north past the Manhattan Club in the old Stewart house. As they went along, Wilson explained.

"The Democratic Club owes its prosperity to the failure of Mr. Coulter to secure control of the Manhattan Club. One of his few weaknesses is his constant catering to men of social standing. He does everything he can to get them in the organization; they can have any office they wish from commissioner to congress. There are several assembly districts where he always makes it a point to nominate young men with well-known, distinguished American names. He is not after their money; the organization will pay all their campaign expenses if they cannot afford it. He wants their names and their company. I believe he has aspirations to be a national leader, and any man with an honored Democratic name need only say what he wants. There's an opportunity for you, Van Buren. You'll see him at the club—he lives there; and if Schenectady is a little slow and quiet for you tell him what you want and come down here. I would be glad to do it, but, somehow, the historic and honored name of Wilson doesn't seem to appeal to him, and in return for my hint he tells me to stay in Schoharie and build up the organization up the State. One thing I will say, he never neglects sending me a check to help me do it."

Wilson stopped to speak to a chance acquaintance who hailed him, but in a moment he had overtaken Van Buren and resumed his talk.

"Well, as I was saying, Mr. Coulter failed to capt-

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ure the Manhattan Club. As you must know, for your uncle was one of its founders, the Manhattan is a respectable club to which belong only the Democrats who can speak and write the English language and don't tuck their napkins in their collars. Among its members are representatives of the old New York families, who keep up the club because their fathers and grandfathers were Democrats, and on account of the cooking and the wines, which used to be the best in New York. The Democratic party in New York City is composed of social extremes—the descendants of the old Dutch aristocracy who were opposed to the English before and during the Revolution, when almost all the English in the colony were Tories and afterwards Federalists; and the descendants of the old Scotch and north of Ireland merchants, who regarded the Church of England as an imitation of the Church of Rome, and hated both of them; and such English families as were overshadowed in the old days by the Phillipses, the Delanceys, the Van Rensselaers, the Van Cortlandts, and the other manor holders. The Revolution ruined the dominant English families, and the anti-English proclivities of the Democratic party made it the natural place for all the old anti-English families. The Republican party is the party of the middle class, the manufacturers and the shopkeepers, the people who own their own houses, the steady churchgoers and pre-eminently respectable, who want a strong government to favor them and keep down their employés and the poorer classes generally. The lower classes naturally side with the aristocrats against the bourgeois. It is a natural alliance—

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the modern Irishman who hates England to-day and the great-grandsons of the Dutchmen who hated the English for taking New Amsterdam and divers other reasons. But here we are at the Democratic Club."

On Fifth Avenue, almost opposite the Vanderbilt houses and a few doors from St. Patrick's Cathedral, is a high, wide-front, brown-stone house the kind with which the avenue was built in the sixties and seventies. In those days this house was one of the finest. It had become old of its kind. When Mr. Coulter failed to elect his candidates for board of managers of the Iroquois Club, he took up the Democratic Club, hitherto a struggling organization, and bought this house for it. The house was redecorated and remodelled at an expense of ninety thousand dollars, and the official Tammany architects made it the most gorgeous club in the city. As a rule the clubs of the better class are severely simple in their furnishings and decorations. The new Democratic Club went to the opposite extreme. The order going out that all Tammany office-holders with salaries of over one thousand two hundred dollars a year were to join gave a huge fund of initiation fees and dues which was expended under Mr. Coulter's direction. The walls of the reception hall were clad in the richest satins and silks, the ceiling alone cost thousands of dollars, and the tapestries and curtains thousands more. The prevailing color was purple, not the purple of the violet, but of the cardinal. The main hall floor was covered with a specially woven rug displaying the tiger's head. Above the huge fireplace was the

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principal feature of the hall, a portrait of Mr. Coulter larger than life. A chandelier with scores of lights hung above the portrait and accentuated it. In front of the fireplace was a magnificent tiger-skin rug, and a large tiger's head was hung in the hall. The emblem of the tiger was on the walls, on the china and the silver—everywhere.

Back of the main hall was the drinking-place, or "caf-fay," as it was called. When Van Buren and Wilson arrived the café was crowded with prosperous-looking men smoking and drinking. They all sat with their faces towards the door, so that they might be prompt to see Mr. Coulter on his arrival and be sure that he saw them, for regular attendance at the club was one of the requisites of favor with the boss.

Van Buren was accustomed to the ways of the University Club, where he usually put up on his occasional visits to New York. Here he noted with curious interest that whenever a man treated he pulled a roll of bills out of his waistcoat-pocket and paid for what he ordered, besides giving the waiter a liberal tip. He also noted that the payments were made in bills of large denominations, fifty and one-hundred dollar bills being the usual tender, with fifty-cent and dollar tips to the waiter.

Wilson and Van Buren sat down on one of the red plush lounges. The crowd paid no attention to them. Everybody was expectantly awaiting the arrival of Mr. Coulter.

"They all gather here to do homage," said Wilson. "It is the same instinct that gathers the courtiers around the European thrones. Any number of people would like to have a monarchy in the

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United States if they were sure of a place at court. It is a little raw and crude here, but what would you have? The nice gradations of obsequiousness in manner and the punctilious observance of the relative steps of court rank cannot be acquired in the few years since most of these men stopped digging trenches or tending bar. They have learned rapidly, and by another generation the rules of municipal precedence will be worked out. It's already been done in Washington; the wives and daughters of the Western senators and cabinet members enjoy it hugely. They don't mind the kotowing to those above them so long as they have the pleasure of snubbing the congressmen's and postmasters' wives.

"Anyhow, this levee to-night does not differ much from the daily scenes in the offices of a bank or any large corporation, where the merchants, brokers, and other suitors sit around, hat in hand, waiting their turn in the dispensing of favors. The same thing takes place at every club, only, as I said, it's a little more raw here and you see the workings of human nature unadorned. It isn't all the district leaders and political heelers, by any means. The presidents of some pretty big corporations find it to their interest to drop in here occasionally. Bankers, financiers, judges, and men whom you would never consider in such a connection, think enough of their worldly and political well-being to do their homage with regularity.

"That is one thing Mr. Coulter insists on. A man who thinks he is too good for this outfit had better not look for favors. The social side is where Mr. Coulter is sensitive. Political knocks he doesn't

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mind. He has been used to them all his life. A punch on the nose wouldn't make him bear a grudge—it would rather remind him of old times. But this social act is new, and he's very sensitive that everybody takes it seriously. He's an idea that the reason Tammany men have such a bad name is that more of them don't wear dress suits. There is something in that. When a man whose grandfather had a dress suit steals, he gets away with a lot, and there's a certain *éclat* to it that doesn't attach to the old vulgar Tammany methods. Mr. Coulter proposes to reform appearances, at any rate. "What an opportunity there is here to study the transformation process at first hand, to see society in the chrysalis stage from which fine gentlemen will develop in a generation or two! A few years ago these men were human caterpillars."

Wilson pointed out the more prominent of the men sitting around waiting the coming of the boss. "There is a young fellow who wants to go to congress. He's a Harvard man, graduated only two years ago. His people have money. I think the boss will send him. With him is a former theatrical manager now engaged in getting out of this aspiring youth whatever he will stand for. Over by the fireplace is a gang of contractors. Some one of the men around that table has his fist in every big contract, public or private, from laying street railroads to extending the pier line or putting up the new schools. Those contractors, like the police, have no politics. They are with the party in power. When Tammany is in, the Tammany member of the firm does the business; under the reformers

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some other name appears, but it's the same concern. It's funny the way the reformers denounce the thievery of Tammany contractors and then go on and do business with the same men."

"Who is that sleek individual walking about the hall?" asked Van Buren.

"That," answered Wilson, following Van Buren's gaze, "is Mr. Coulter's handy man, and he'll be his ruin if a stop is not put to it. Notice the way he is watching the door to be the first to greet the boss. How he ever worked himself in I don't know, but everybody hates him. He is a sort of go-between or jackal who collects the rake-off and attends to Mr. Coulter's financial business for him. We are all afraid of him, for he's an adroit liar and he has the boss's ear."

The entrance doors were flung open by the liveried hall-men, and everybody rose as the boss, accompanied by Commissioner Mahoney, entered, the commissioner three steps behind. Club servants lined up against the walls; the sleek individual rushed effusively to be the first to get to the boss, the justice of the Supreme Court being not far behind. The men from the café gathered in the background like a group to be photographed, every man trying to be as conspicuous as possible that the boss might know he was faithful in his attendance at court. All conversation ceased, and there was a deferential hush while the boss went into the main reception-room and, seating himself on the crimson divan, gave audience to the waiting crowd. The crowd at Tammany Hall had specified business to transact. The men at the club simply wanted Mr. Coulter to

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know that they were there in attendance. His eye glanced over them and noted the few who had business with him. By-and-by he went up-stairs to his private apartments, for, though he had a house near by, his real living-place was the second floor of the club, especially fitted for his use.

Wilson and Van Buren stayed to dine at the club. The dining-room was crowded, as it was generally known that Mr. Coulter would be there. The diners all wore evening clothes and had the air of being obviously dressed up. It was plain that they were not accustomed to it. A few had diamonds in their white lawn ties, but so many of them had tucked their napkins under their chins that it was difficult to determine that point. Mr. Coulter sat at a table with Commissioner Mahoney in earnest conversation. The dinner was short, and on their way out from the dining-room Mr. Coulter noticed Wilson and Van Buren and walked over to their table. Commissioner Mahoney knew Wilson, and Mr. Coulter introduced him to Van Buren. They went down-stairs to the main hall where the throng had increased. Mr. Coulter stood on the tiger rug under his portrait, while one by one the attending politicians, judges, office-seekers, and contractors came and paid homage.

"This crowd reminds me of our old friend the East Side jurist," commented Wilson. "You know, he was district judge in the times when the judges did not have to be lawyers. I met him in the Hoffman House a few evenings ago beaming with jubilation."

"'Congratulate me, assemblyman,' he said, 'I

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have been admitted to the practice of the honorable profession of the law, and I am a genuine attorney and counsellor.' "

"Why did you go to all that trouble?" I asked him.


"'It is a matter of self-respect,' replied the judge, with dignity. 'I am not going to be a grafter any more, but I'll dispense counsel and advice for the legitimate K. F.'s, just like my friends Evarts and Choate and the rest of them. When a man wants my influence or advice now he can come to the office and plank down the K. F.'s.'

"That rather puzzled me. I had never heard of the K. F.'s, and I inquired what they were.

"Somewhat scornful at my ignorance, the judge explained.

"'K. F.'s! You don't know what K. F.'s is? Why, that's what statesmen and counsellors call 'em. K. F.'s is counsel fees.'"

VIII

T was the Fourth of July—the day sacred to the remembrance of the declaration of our national independence. Tammany Hall was gaudily decorated for the occasion. Profusely draped with American flags were the platform and main gallery, while the Doric columns were encircled with bannerets, upon which were attached coats of arms of the thirteen original States. The State of New York occupied the most conspicuous position among the galaxy of emblems, its insignia being suspended from the arch above the stage. From the dome to the various columns lines were suspended, upon which fluttered the ensigns of the American navy. In the rear of the stage an immense flag was draped to represent an American shield with the stars concentrated in the centre. On the front of the stage was a short pole crowned with a liberty cap of the style worn by the sansculottes in the French Revolution. On either side were the old Tammany banners of the Indian tribes and chiefs.

The great hall was crowded to its fullest capacity. A band of music was playing national airs, and the vast assemblage was wild with patriotic enthusiasm—the lively beginning of the Fourth-of-July cele-

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bration by the Tammany braves. As the band played, the patriotic outbursts grew more tumultuous. Rousing cheers were given for "The Boss," followed by rounds of cheers for the lesser bosses of the respective districts. Suddenly the band began to play "Hail to the Chief," as Mr. Coulter, attired in a Prince Albert coat, with a glossy silk hat on his massive head, entered, leaning on the arm of the chief sachem. They were followed by other sachems, all with their hats on and the ancient bands of office around their shoulders and across their breasts. All were clad alike in the frock coats and silk hats of Tammany statesmen. Simultaneously they took off their hats to the American flag, while the liberty pole was raised in the air and the band played "The Star - Spangled Banner." Then, as if the whole programme had been rehearsed for a stage setting, a burly fellow with a huge black mustache jumped to his feet, and, waving his hat above his head, shouted, "Three cheers for Coulter!" The audience responded vociferously. Slowly and with great dignity Mr. Coulter rose to his feet. Instantly the same exuberant person with the large black mustache yelled out, "Three cheers for our honored leader!" Prolonged and deafening cheers followed, with a rousing tiger.

In a low tone the honored leader expressed his thanks for the reception given him.

"We meet to renew our fealty to the institutions of the great republic, which has no stronger support than this venerable organization. Its members, whether native or adopted citizens, know no other allegiance, and as long as Tammany Hall stands

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they will gather to celebrate on this anniversary the birth of the land of the free and the home of the brave."

"Ah, wasn't that a great speech!" exclaimed one, with a burst of enthusiasm.

"What a fine man!" said another.

"What a great leader!" remarked a third.

The reading of the Declaration of Independence was next in order. A young edition of the black-mustached propounder of cheers, with square shoulders and a self-confident air, rose among the politicians seated upon the stage, advanced to the front of the platform, and with a sweet, rich brogue fervently read the immortal document. The reading was followed by a round of cheers, after which the band again played "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Congressman Forrest, the idol of the city Democracy, came to the front of the stage and waved his hand aloft. He carried himself with a haughty air, but it was natural and unaffected. He had the martial bearing of a typical soldier and the courtly graces of a statesman of the old school. He was tall and spare and straight as an arrow. His head was covered with jet-black hair—a striking contrast to his silvery mustache of military cut. To him was assigned the principal speech of the day. It was a speech replete with patriotic utterances and eloquent appeals for party fealty. While launching invectives and sarcasms against the opposite party, he regaled his hearers with humorous stories and witticisms, keeping them alternating between applause and laughter. His peroration finished, he sat down amid cheers.

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Once more the band played "The Star-Spangled Banner." The spark of patriotism kindled in the breast of the masses in the body of the hall by the orator was fanned into flame by the inspiring music. They sprang to their feet, waving handkerchiefs, hats, and canes above their heads, and accompanying the music with their voices, until the hall echoed and re-echoed with the discordant sounds.

Van Buren had come down expecting to meet Wilson on the platform. He had never been in the hall before, and he had never heard a political speech that had begun to have such an inspiring effect upon him as the one he had just heard. Would he ever dare to aspire to such a height?

The minutes passed quickly, but still Assemblyman Wilson, who was scheduled as the next speaker, failed to appear. The crowd soon became clamorous, and to allay their impatience the glee club amused them with songs. Still Wilson did not appear, and after several more glees had been sung the crowd, anxious to get at the promised collation, became unruly.

"I'll bet he's off again," said some one on the stage.

"He never shows up when he's wanted," said another.

Various other uncomplimentary remarks of a similar nature were uttered. Mr. Coulter looked perplexed.

"Mr. Van Buren," he said, placing his hand gently on the young man's shoulder and speaking in a low voice, "won't you kindly make the speech in place of Mr. Wilson, who has not shown up?"

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In a flash Van Buren saw that a wonderful opportunity had come to him to place himself prominently before the public. Yet he was nearly on the point of declining, fearing failure, when he heard a kindly whisper in his ear, "Brace up, old man; this is the opportunity of your life, and I'll bet a thousand to one you will do it up brown."

The words roused him and gave him courage. He knew he was young and unknown. He knew the disadvantage of following so brilliant an orator and so popular a favorite as the speaker who had preceded him. He knew how disastrous to his political hopes would be a failure. The thought stiffened him and put him on his mettle. He advanced to the front of the platform as cool and self-possessed as if he had been in the habit of making public speeches all his life.

He was introduced by Mr. Coulter, who told the audience that he was a new and valuable recruit to the organization from Schenectady, and would ably entertain them. Then there was the customary reception of three cheers and a tiger. The band struck up the popular air, "Fourteen Miles from Schenectady to Troy," and the crowd yelled with delight.

With the true instinct of the natural born orator, the substance of his speech flashed to his mind, but, for all that, the strains of the music still ringing in his ears, the tumultuous shouting of the crowd, the stifling atmosphere, and the sight of the sea of uplifted faces looking expectantly at him slightly disconcerted him. He began to speak in a low and tremulous voice. A score of voices in the rear of

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the hall shouted, "Louder! Louder!" He cast his eyes in that direction, but the glare of the July sun blazing through the front windows obscured his sight and confused his thoughts. His imagination transformed the gaze of the hundreds of upturned faces into a legion of grinning, mocking faces. A mist came before his eyes, his brain reeled, a tremor seized him, and he realized that he was about to collapse.

"Great Scott! He's going to break down!" whispered some one.

"He'd better go back to Schenectady," muttered another.

He felt he was about to fail, and made a tremendous effort to stand erect. Then the mist before his eyes lifted. In a moment all fear and timidity vanished. "No man can be too proud," he began, "of being an American citizen. Under the American flag there exist no such class or social distinctions as in the monarchical countries of the Old World. Here all enjoy equal rights and liberties, whether they come from Germany or Ireland or Russia or Italy or Kamtchatka or—Schenectady."

The humorous reference to his birthplace was appreciated by the audience, and caused a ripple of laughter which dispelled any remaining anxiety that existed about the young man from Schenectady breaking down.

He had not spoken five minutes when all feeling of prejudice had vanished. His personal bearing was commanding; his features were animated and his voice was melodious and sympathetic. He told of the dangers and hardships incurred by the early

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settlers of this country, and of the great sacrifice of blood and treasure to secure our national independence. He drew tears from the eyes of many when he depicted single instances of bravery, and the heroic sacrifices of life and blood by the Continentals in the cause of freedom. In conclusion, he made an appeal to their patriotism to help maintain inviolate the liberties so dearly purchased, and to teach their children to cherish and venerate the memory of their ancestors, who had so nobly fought for the great principles of human freedom.

He had spoken nearly an hour, but no one thought of the length of the speech; he had held the audience spellbound by the vigor of his utterances and the charm of his oratory. When he was about to finish the interest of the audience was so intense that they cried, "Go on. Go on!" He spoke a few minutes longer, and these were his closing words:

"So long as the principles of true democracy live in the hearts of men, so long our republican government will live. Generations will pass away, the ages will roll on; but the nation's independence is established on a basis deep and broad and lasting. There will be political dissensions, bitter campaigns and strifes for political supremacy; but the foundations of the government will continue unchanged, unmoved, unshaken—as strong and steadfast as the everlasting hills. This Fourth-of-July celebration will be maintained with the same pride and enthusiasm as to-day, and the American flag, so conspicuously displayed here to-day, will ever wave in triumph over our glorious land."

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Upon the conclusion of his speech the applause shook the dome of the hall. Every one tried to get near him. Mr. Coulter was the first to grasp him by the hand. He simply said, "Thank you, Mr. Van Buren, for entertaining our people so well."

IX



THE next morning Commissioner Mahoney dropped in at the Hoffman House and found Van Buren reading the newspaper accounts of his speech and watching the passers-by on Broadway.

"Mr. Coulter thinks very highly of you," the commissioner began. "That speech of yours took. Why don't you stay here and locate in my district? We'll nominate you for the assembly this fall. I won't guarantee an election, for the district is Republican, but it's full of Mugwumps and you may catch them. Anyhow, it won't do you any harm if you are defeated. Open a law-office somewhere down-town and I'll see that you get enough business and references to keep you going. We want more men like you."

Van Buren was surprised at the rapidity of his political progress. Within the last few days he had met the leaders, seen at first hand the workings of the machine, delivered a Fourth-of-July oration, and now he was invited to become a candidate for office.

"You are too fast for me, commissioner," he replied. "I won't say that I don't like it, and I feel immensely flattered. But wouldn't your voters

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resent having a carpet-bagger from Schenectady nominated for them?"

"Not a bit of it. They would rather have some outsider than one of themselves. Your name is enough, not to speak of the kind of speech you can put up. I won't beat about the bush. I like you personally, but it's the name the organization is after. If I didn't think nominating you would strengthen the organization in my district I'd never suggest it. You might be the best friend I had in the world, but if your candidacy wouldn't help the ticket I'd be against it. Our attitude in the National Convention is going to hurt among the class of people who live on Murray Hill, and I want a man like you to stave it off. You won't lose no matter how your personal candidacy results. We'll elect our mayor this fall. The other fellows won't split the party because they want to elect the President. And there'll be enough retainers from the corporation counsel's office let alone what you can do on your own account."

"I'm going home to-day," said Van Buren, "and I'll think it over and let you know in a few days."

The Southwestern Limited landed Van Buren at Albany in the afternoon. The train did not stop at Schenectady, and Van Buren got off at Albany and went up to the Holland Club to think it over before going home to discuss it with his mother. He had always liked the Holland Club, it was so comfortable and peaceful. The members had belonged to it for so long that they broke up into groups like family parties. There was a political group with a room to itself, the whist-players who

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met and dispersed on the stroke of the clock, the billiard and pool room, the doctor's room, and the library, where the genealogists and antiquarians gathered to recount the sins and shortcomings of Albany's great-grandfathers. Van Buren knew everybody.

It would be pleasant to spend a winter in Albany and to take part in the active life of the capital. What a contrast it would be; indeed, what a contrast the men sitting around the old mahogany were to the rulers of New York with whom he had been spending the last few days! And what future was there for him in Schenectady, or Albany either, for that matter? These men around the table, what had they accomplished—what were they doing? They all had grandfathers and nominal occupations, though they were supported more by what their grandfathers left than by what they earned. How different their manners and their habits! Still, they were contented, and was it not better to have contentment than ambition?

"What's this, Van Buren?" asked old Major Doremus. "How do you like wearing the tiger's skin? Why didn't you talk the ten commandments to those fellows? That's what they need."

"Oh, it's only a difference in locality as to what commandments fit the tightest."

He went out and took the Schenectady car that passes the club door. He found his mother all interest over his great speech.

"I'm so glad and proud of your success, Van," she said, affectionately. "The papers are full of it. I have copies of them all and I cut out your speech to

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put it in the scrap-book I used to keep for your father. Here are the accounts of his speech years ago. It has pleased me so much."

"What would you think of my going to New York, mother? Mr. Mahoney has offered me the nomination for assemblyman of his district, and he wants me to move my office to New York and practise there."

"Well, I don't want to stand in your way, Van, and it may be for the best. Conditions have changed from what they were in your father's day. I have lived my life here and I could not leave the place, but if it would open a wider field for you, and if you were elected to the assembly you would almost be at home."

"I have been thinking it over, mother, and I see nothing ahead here. My law practice hardly suffices to keep me awake in office hours, and I think in a place like this the fact that everybody knows me, and all about me, is more of a hinderance than a help. Father's old friends look on me still as a boy, and when they have any business of importance they give it to Judge Van Vecht or old Senator Boyer."

That evening Van Buren received a visit from his cousin, Amy Richards. They had grown up together in Schenectady and a warm friendship existed between them. Amy shared Van Buren's political ambitions and they often discussed the possibilities of his political career. He found himself hoping now that her views would coincide with his.

She, too, had read his speech in the papers and congratulated him on his success. He told her of

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Commissioner Mahoney's invitation and that he thought of accepting it.

"There is nothing for him to look forward to here," urged his mother, as Van Buren waited for Amy to speak. "I am told that Schenectady is becoming more and more Republican, and that all young men with a desire for political advancement ought to be on the Republican side. We would be very sorry to have Van go," she said, tenderly placing her hand on his shoulder, "but I suppose we should see a good deal of him, especially if he is elected to the legislature."

But Amy's views were not so encouraging. "Why do you want to go to New York, and what honor is there in being a Tammany assemblyman?" she asked. "It might take longer to make your mark here, but think of your father and all the other great men Schenectady has produced! Why not keep at it here?"

"New York's a bigger place."

"New York is a good place to visit, Van, but I could never see how any one could live there. I like to go for a few weeks' shopping and the theatres, but I'm always glad to get back to the restfulness and friendliness of life here."

"You can make a national reputation."

"In New York reputations are lost as quickly as they are made. Why, take that speech of yours. Your friends will remember it here years after it is forgotten in New York. Events don't live there any longer than the copy of the newspaper that prints them."

"Don't talk as if I were going to a foreign country

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never to return. It isn't as serious as that," Van Buren laughed.

"New York is a foreign land. It is a modern Minotaur, and I never knew a man to return except as a broken-down failure, and I know you won't be that."

"Give me your blessing, coz, and tell me to go and fight the monster."

"You can have the blessing without the asking, but I won't tell you to fight anybody. What one has to guard against in New York is not other people, but one's self. It is the lowering of one's own standards to the level of one's associates, and I don't see how you can associate with that Tammany crowd and do yourself any good."

"Oh, there are different ways of doing it. For instance, there was Fernando Wood; let me tell you a story about him," said Van Buren, with a twinkle of fun in his eye. "You know he was elected to congress term after term in my father's days."

"Yes, I know."

"Well, his district was on the West Side of the city, and took in the longshoremen and the tenements of Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth avenues, where the freight-handlers live and the saloons are thicker than grocery stores. He had control of the party machinery and was easily renominated time after time. The district was so strongly Democratic that his election was a matter of course. He did not live in the district, but in a big house on Riverside Heights, and he became so indifferent to district affairs that he never appeared there until a few weeks before the election to accept the nomination

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at the congress convention. This had gone on for years, until a considerable feeling arose that the district should be represented by one of its own residents. One campaign a saloon-keeper with a large local acquaintance nominated himself and secured the Republican, Labor, and Anti-Tammany endorsements. He also had assurances from many of the minor Tammany workers, who were incensed at Mr. Wood's indifference to them. Ten days before the election the saloon-keeper had the whole district with him. Mr. Wood had been perfunctorily nominated as usual, and as usual had paid no attention to his personal canvass. Finally alarming reports came to him. He was assured that his competitor was going night and day in every saloon and corner of the district, shaking hands and treating, and that unless something was done, the combined opposition would win.

"Late on the Saturday afternoon before the election, a victoria with two men in livery on the box, drawn by a pair of high-stepping, well-groomed horses, the silver chains on the harness clanking with impatience, stopped on Tenth Avenue as the freight-handlers from the New York Central yards were returning to their homes in the tenements of Hell's Kitchen, as the neighborhood was called. The sight, a novel one to that neighborhood, at once drew a crowd. The small boys hooted and began a bombardment of stale vegetables. The victoria stopped. Congressman Wood stood up and waved his gloved hand to still the crowd. There was at once a silence of curiosity.

"My constituents," said he, "I am the member

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of congress from this district and you are my constituents. I come to you that you may see what manner of man I am and how you are honored by the opportunity of voting for my re-election. I have heard that one of yourselves is going around among you in his working clothes and shirt-sleeves appealing for your suffrages. I make no such appeal. If you do not regard it as a privilege to be allowed to cast your votes for me, don't do it. I have heard that criticism is made of my manner of living and entertaining. Let me tell you that my dinners are the most expensive given by any member of congress and my entertainments are recognized as the best in Washington or New York. I paid five thousand dollars for this pair of horses. The harness is solid silver. This cane which I hold has a solid gold head. This apparel in which I am clad is the best and most costly money can buy. When I go to see you, my constituents, for that is what you are and you cannot help yourselves before the 4th of March next, I come with my best—my best apparel, my best horses, my best appearance. You should be proud of me and proud of yourselves that I represent you. If you are not, you are not worthy to have the kind of representative I am. I have made my annual call on you with the same state I call on the President of the United States. Drive on, James.'

"Amid cheers of 'Rah for Fernandy Wud, the iligant gentleman,' the coachman drove on, and Mr. Wood was re-elected by the usual overwhelming majority.

"Now I don't mean that I am another Fernandy Wud, but there are other ways of succeeding in

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politics besides living in bar-rooms and putting one's self on a level with the lowest of one's constituency. It is the same rule of popular favor that sends the French plays with their suggestiveness and improprieties to the fashionable theatres while the Bowery tolerates no play where the villain is not thwarted and virtue triumphant."

"Are you practising on us?" asked Amy, smiling at him. "Your Mr. Wood's tactics might succeed better if women voted."

"Women do not want to vote," said Mrs. Van Buren; "love and home are the two great motives in a woman's life and there is no room for political distractions."

"Isn't love a powerful motive in a man's life, too, mother?" asked Van Buren.

"Yes, but not in the same way, my boy."

"Love does not mean the same thing to a man as to a woman," said Amy. "It is everything to a woman. She wants to be positively convinced of its reality, while from what I've seen of married men they take that for granted."

"You are confusing love and matrimony," said Van Buren, smiling at her heat.

"It is a man's way to joke about such a serious subject. You don't jest about politics, and love is a thousand times more sacred."

"I think young men and women are more alike in their views of love than of matrimony," said Mrs. Van Buren. "A man marries for a home and family. A woman marries for love. She wants him daily and hourly to show his love for her until death."

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"You look so young, mother, when you blush," Van Buren interrupted. "I do not think you can well compare politics and love," he continued a little later. "Politics is the greatest game in the world and it is played for the greatest stakes, the happiness and welfare of mankind. Love is an individual thing, it excludes others. The most openly selfish and self-centred people in the world are a newly engaged couple. Politics is the opposite. The selfishness must be hidden and the individual concealed in the general crowd. However, I'll know more about it in a few months."

"Well, if you will go, I wish you all success, Van," said Amy. "You must come back and report progress as often as you can."

"I certainly shall. I don't mean to give up my old home and my old friends."

X



AN BUREN'S time was taken up for a few days in putting his affairs in shape for his removal to New York. He did not give up his office in Schenectady, but arranged for its occupation with a friend, who, like himself, had ample time to look after additional business and attend to the few clients. The cases that were to be tried at the fall term of court Van Buren intended to look after himself. His father's law library, which he had kept up to date, was overhauled, and from the hundreds of books a selection was made and boxed, ready to be shipped to his new offices in New York as soon as he had secured them.

The morning after his arrival in New York Van Buren went over to police headquarters on Mulberry Street to call on Commissioner Mahoney. He found his way to the private office through an anteroom filled with policemen and politicians.

"I am glad to see you," said the commissioner. "I engaged a room for you the day after our talk, so you would be sure to have the four months' residence the law requires. No use of taking a chance on a little thing like that. I am glad you decided to come with us."

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"Yes, I'm here, sink or swim, survive or perish. Let me know what I'm to do."

"Look around to-day and take dinner with me at the Manhattan Club this evening. After dinner we'll go up to the Juniata Club, where the general committee of my district meets to-night. I don't advise you to go on the general committee. You'll get our support, of course, and the less you are identified with us the easier it will be for you with the outside voters. It is a peculiar district, about a third of the voters are Tammany and about as many are machine Republicans. The rest would like to beat us both. Their idea is that every man who knows the number of the election district in which he lives is a practical politician, and should be disfranchised for the first offence and sent to Sing Sing for the second. These Mugwump angels always vote against Tammany and that makes the district Republican. This fall they'll vote for the Democratic President, and, as the present assemblyman is a machine Republican, they'll vote for you if it's handled right. Maybe you would like to see police headquarters before you go."

Van Buren said that he would, and the commissioner told one of the clerks to take him around. The clerk took him first to the Rogues' Gallery.

"This is what most visitors are interested in," he explained. Van Buren said he had often heard of it, and looked over the cabinets filled with labelled photographs. The collection had grown too large to be wholly displayed in cabinet form, and the out-of-date portraits were filed away in boxes around the room.

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"It is wonderful the way a man's memory for faces can be cultivated," said the clerk. "There are men in the detective bureau who can give the names of all the living originals in this collection and their prison records. I think some of our men could recite the name of every criminal from New York in Sing Sing and the date that he will get out. We always keep track of them when they return. Most of them aren't out long."

"Maybe your keeping track of them so helps to send them back," Van Buren commented. "What can an ex-convict do to earn an honest living if a detective drops around to look him up every few weeks? There are not many employers or businesses that would keep a man who is under such constant surveillance."

"That's true enough. I know of only one merchant who will employ an ex-convict. He's an old fellow from the South who has a unique dry-goods store on Broadway, and prefers to have ex-convicts, occasional drunkards, and the like. I don't see how he works it, but they never steal from him. He pays them their wages every night and has part of the store fitted up for them to sleep in if they wish. If a man feels like going on a drunk he is expected to put in an application for a vacation for that purpose. Still, as you say, an old lag hasn't much chance. Nobody wants him except the central office, and back he goes to do another bit before he's got the prison gray off his face."

Van Buren went through the museum of horrors where the souvenirs of the celebrated crimes of the last fifty years are kept. He inquired its purpose.

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"These bits of hangman's rope and revolvers, jimmies, blood-stained clothing, and all the rest come in handy. They are rather impressive strung up there, aren't they? The inspector uses them for all they're worth. Many a man has told more than he intended to in this room. Something in the atmosphere leads a man to squeal. Then there are other ways of getting him to talk if a little moral suasion in this room doesn't start his tongue."

That afternoon Van Buren called on Judge Murphy. The succession of interruptions from callers was so continuous that it seemed to him as if the judge's house must be dedicated to the use of the general public. He watched and studied the visitors, and heard what many of them had to say. It was, as the judge had said, "scores of people coming to ask scores of favors and getting scores of promises." In point of fact, the front door-bell kept jingling all day and most of the night for the admission of a miscellaneous crowd of callers who did not stand on ceremony. With effrontery they took possession of the parlor, or dining-room, or any place where they could find a lounge or chair to sit on and await the judge's arrival. Some more privileged than others had the entrée through the basement without ringing the bell, and were allowed to roam all over the house and make themselves at home, each believing himself, on account of important services claimed to be rendered to the judge, entitled to some office or favor.

The judge was playing politics all the time. Above all, he wished to be considered democratic, and for this reason was accessible to everybody

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without discrimination. His door was as wide open to a street-sweeper and a coal-heaver as to an alderman or senator. In his absence his representative was "Mary Ann," as everybody called her. She was a poor relative of his first wife and an inestimable treasure to him.

Mary Ann was short and stoutly built, with a pleasant face and smile that often developed into a boisterous guffaw. She dressed tidily, moved about quickly, talked loudly, her "sweet Irish brogue" at times drowning the din of all the others' talk. She had three accomplishments: she could dance an Irish jig, sing an Irish song, and drink Irish whiskey. Moreover, she had the reputation of being as good a politician as there was in the city—and that is saying a good deal. There was not a prominent man in the party she did not know. As to the district politicians, she knew them like a book. Her acquaintance with the heelers and office-seekers in the district was unlimited and unerring. She knew their political record and whether they were entitled or not to share in the loaves and fishes of political plunder.

Van Buren watched the manœuvres of Mary Ann with great interest, and, in fact, she had no hesitation in making known to him her programme. He soon saw she was indispensable to the judge, because she knew precisely whom he wished to meet or avoid, and she carefully managed them accordingly. To the laboring man for whom the leader either would not or could not obtain an appointment on the police force, or in the fire or park departments, she would whisper in her soft, rich brogue such plausible

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reasons for his non-appointment at present, and paint to him such a glowing picture of the probability of his appointment at some future time that he would depart feeling as thankful as if he had really been appointed, and indulge in the delusive hope of soon drawing monthly stipends from the exhaustless exchequers of the great Manhattan municipality. The influential alderman, whom the judge—for reasons of his own—wished particularly to see, was treated with greater consideration. With him she hobnobbed, and, after cajoling him about his political importance, inquired solicitously about the health of his dear family and his relatives in the old country, wheedling him into patiently waiting until the judge appeared.

At a glance she could distinguish an impostor from one of the regular workers in the ranks. All such received scant courtesy; the dulcet voice changed into a harsh treble; she would at times, with masculine strength, grasp the sham politician by the coat collar and hurl him ignominiously into the street. The same fate awaited those who came to the house intoxicated seeking jobs on some city work. This occurred not infrequently. When a politician of influence came into the house too befuddled to talk, Mary Ann would act as a diplomat instead of a self-constituted policeman. Instead of ejecting the statesman, she would coax him until he became sensible and was willing to wait quietly until the judge put in an appearance. If, in spite of all Mary Ann's good advice, he insisted on singing, she would lure him into the library on the next floor under the pretext that she had a private

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message from the judge to deliver to him. The library was a misnomer; it was simply a cosey room containing a comfortable lounge, and set apart by the judge as his private room where he and his friends could remain in seclusion. When the door of this sanctuary once closed upon an exuberant public official, Mary Ann would plead with almost maternal solicitude, and in most persuasive accents say, "Now, alderman, dear, like a good man lie down and take a little nap until the judge's return." Whether it was the temptation of the cosey room or the soft words of Mary Ann, invariably the hilarious politician would obediently lie down and go to sleep.

Mary Ann was invaluable to the judge in other capacities than those of chamberlain or police officer. During feasts held in celebration of political victories, or of gatherings consolatory for political defeats, after the dishes were removed and the assembled statesmen had reached a happy and exhilarated condition either in celebrating a victory or in drowning their sorrow for a defeat, Mary Ann was always called upon to dance a jig. The tables were removed and chairs hustled around the four sides of the room. Like a bashful maiden of sixteen, Mary Ann gracefully tripped to the middle of the floor, and, daintily raising her frock, to the whistling of a tune and a general clapping of hands would start an Irish jig. Soon she warmed up to her work; her feet flew faster, her body swayed swifter, and while wildly jigging around the room at regular intervals she would give a loud shout like a war-whoop.

A short time before nominations were to be made, aspirants for office deemed it a good stroke of policy

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to let Mary Ann win large pots of money at poker. It was, indeed, whispered around the ward that no man could get a nomination or receive an appointment until Mary Ann had been "seen." Every one paid tribute to her for favors received from the judge. A poor street-sweeper or driver on the street cars often pressed a ten-dollar bill into her hand out of gratitude for his humble appointment. Others, obtaining better places, made the hand-pressure correspondingly pleasant.

The judge received a salary of ten thousand dollars per annum, yet his household, personal, and political expenses exceeded this amount, for he drove horses and gambled and bet on the races. Part of the excess over his salary was derived from an interest he had in a contract from the city to build a sewer. No one ever dared to charge him with receiving any part of Mary Ann's perquisites.

Mary Ann was not even susceptible to the blandishments of love in return for her influence with the judge. She had tried and failed. There was Alderman Maguire, a confirmed bachelor, the Beau Brummel of the district, always dressed in a Prince Albert coat, high silk hat, and red necktie. He led the dances at all the political balls and picnics. The girls raved about him; the young men imitated him. It had been decided by the judge not to renominate him for alderman, because he voted against the building of a sewer in the annexed district in which the judge was interested, well knowing that the contract was to be awarded to a friend. The judge believed the alderman was under many obligations in being selected for the position, and

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therefore was not entitled to a consideration for his vote as were his colleagues representing other wards. Maguire was bound to secure the renomination if possible. He believed himself irresistible with the fair sex, and on thinking the matter over made up his mind that the best way to secure a renomination was to make desperate love to Mary Ann.

One rainy afternoon, about a fortnight before the convention, he called at the house and had the good-fortune to find Mary Ann alone in the library. Like a crafty statesman, he did not immediately begin his love-making, but, seating himself next to her on the cosy lounge, gave a long and deep-drawn sigh.

"What's the matter wid ye, alderman?" asked Mary Ann.

"Ah, Mary Ann," he replied, "'tis a dreary day. I felt awfully lonesome all alone in me room, and so I just thought I would come here and have a chat wid yer, as I always derive so much comfort from yer society."

"I am sure, alderman," simpered Mary Ann, "ye are welcome to me society if it benefits ye."

"How bright you make everything appear about you," he said, looking around the cheerful room with a simulated air of regret. "If I could only have such comfort in my place."

"Well," rejoined Mary Ann, sympathetically, "why don't you marry some good woman, and she'll soon make your home look comfortable."

The alderman moved closer to Mary Ann and took her unresisting hand in his.

"Ah," he sighed, "if I had only known you when we were younger!"

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An embarrassing pause ensued. Mary Ann did something she had not been guilty of since she entered politics—she actually blushed; but nature's scarlet hue did not long mantle her furrowed cheeks and brow.

"Arragh," she simpered, "it is not long ago whin the young min called me 'Sweet Mary' instead of 'Mary Ann,' as now, and shure I am not ould, nither are you, alderman, dear."


"And shure, Mary," he said, pressing her hand more tenderly, "ould or young, how could a man think of marrying when everybody is against him; when his office, his bread-and-butter, will be taken away from him by the judge. Now, Mary, dear, if you will coax the judge—and I know you can do it—to renominate me for alderman, I'll bless you all my life, and after I am elected I'll come around and we can talk it over again, Mary, dear."

She pushed his hand away. With anger blazing in her eyes, and with her brogue strongly accentuated by her excitement, she cried:

"An' ye tink to fool me wid swate words and false promises, and pretind to care for me, when ye only want me to help to have ye nominated!" Pointing her uplifted hand to the door, she exclaimed, in righteous indignation, "Get out, ye spalpeen, and niver show yer dirty face in this house again!"

This was the last time Mary Ann ever permitted any of the political habitués to address her in tender accents of love, or even to broach the subject to her.

XI

FTER dinner Commissioner Mahoney and Van Buren went to the Juniata Club, on Sixth Avenue, on the edge of the Murray Hill district. The club occupied two floors over a restaurant. One floor was fitted up as a meeting-room, with a platform and chairs and an office for the district leader and the secretary. The other floor had a general reading-room, a billiard-room, and several card-rooms. As it was meeting night the main room was comfortably filled. Most of the men were young. They were the election district captains and their friends. The commissioner explained to Van Buren that there were twenty-seven election districts in the assembly district, and that every election district had a captain who looked after its affairs and its voters, and who had a little committee of his own with a general rendezvous at some saloon or cigar store. The captains made up the executive committee of the district, and they and their little committees constituted the general district committee. All the district general committeemen were members of the general committee of Tammany Hall, which has, all told, eight or ten thousand members; the district executive committeemen were the Tammany committee on organization, which has

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as many members as there are election districts, nine hundred or a thousand, and each assembly district elects a member of the Tammany executive committee which selects the boss."

"A sort of human pyramid," said Van Buren.

"That is what a democracy is, an opportunity for every man to rise and a certainty that not more than one at a time can be on top."

The monthly meeting came to order. The chairman was a well-known lawyer, an assistant in the corporation counsel's office, and partner in a firm to which his political connections brought profitable business. There was little to be done. Commissioner Mahoney offered a resolution indorsing the action of the Democratic National Convention and ratifying the ticket and the platform. Van Buren made a short speech which was received with applause. The commissioner introduced him as "a talented orator who has located in our district, and whose honored name assures the strength and purity of his democracy." Another young lawyer made a seconding speech. Then the resolution was unanimously adopted. The roll was called by the secretary and the monthly dues collected. Within half an hour the committee meeting had adjourned. Everything was done with the prearranged precision and timeliness of the machinery of a clock, and it was evident that the idea of proceeding in any other way did not occur to any member. After the meeting the members of the committee went upstairs to the billiard-rooms, most of them to sit around the poker-tables. There is said to be no game in the world possessing such possibilities as

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poker. The playing was straight enough, though now and then exceptions occurred. A short time before a card-sharp worked his way into the games, and got in some of his fine work to the serious loss of several of the players. He posed as a street-sweeper, and, what is more, he was a street-sweeper and worked with the gang. It turned out that a prominent politician, knowing his skill in putting up cards, got him his position as street-sweeper to give him the entrée among the players, and furnished the capital to back him up. They divided large sums between them, until the sharp was recognized, when he dropped his street broom and disappeared.

It was, indeed, a novel sight for Van Buren, the intermingling of political affairs with cards, social recreation, and conviviality. It was evident that the Juniata Club was to these young men what the Mohawk Club, of Schnectady, and the Holland Club, of Albany, were to their members. Sometimes young men of slender pockets but ambitious projects would seat themselves at the poker-tables occupied by the older and bigger players, and in order to become better acquainted with them, and to make a favorable impression, would play for high stakes and lose large sums, which they could ill afford to do.

One evening, later in the season, when Van Buren was watching a game in which Commissioner Mahoney was a player, a young man named Harry McNulty came in and joined in the game. Van Buren knew him as the assistant cashier in a large department store. He was a bright and handsome

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young fellow, and although he was losing heavily he did not seem to be worried over the fluctuations of the game. When he finally stopped playing and rose from the table to take his departure, he bade his fellow-players a cheery good-night as though his losses were a matter of no consequence.

"Why do you go so early?" asked one of the players, kindly.

"You have taken my money among you, and so I thought I'd take my leave," was his smiling response.

Van Buren's curiosity was keenly excited. He could not understand how a young man could lose so much money and show indifference to the loss. He followed the young man into the street, and a moment later was by his side.

"I beg your pardon for mentioning it," said Van Buren, touching him gently on the arm, "but you have just been losing heavily playing poker and I thought I might be of service to you."

"In what way?"

"Possibly get your money back."

"I don't think you can do that, and I wouldn't ask you to if you could."

"And why not?"

"Because I am not that kind of a player."

The night was warm and Van Buren was interested. He invited him to take a cigar, and the two strolled into Bryant Park. McNulty said he had lost five thousand dollars at the poker game, and that the money belonged to his widowed mother, which had been paid to him that day as the proceeds of the sale of a small place in the country left

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her by his father, who had been dead only a few months.

"What induced you to risk losing the money?" Van Buren asked.

"I was told by a friend," the young man explained, "that if I lost five thousand dollars to Commissioner Mahoney at poker he would get me a three thousand dollar a year clerkship in the comptroller's office, which I could retain as long as I liked."

"Did your mother know of this arrangement?"

"She did."

"Now that you have lost the money—you expect the clerkship?"

"I was told so most positively."

"I don't believe the commissioner is in that sort of business."

After some further talk it was arranged to return at once and see the commissioner, as soon as he had finished his poker game, and receive from his own lips a ratification. The idea was to give the young man the pleasing assurance that it was all right and relieve his mother of unnecessary anxiety. They had not long to wait. They found the commissioner in the private office.

"Well, commissioner," said young McNulty, in a pleasant tone, "I have let you win five thousand dollars from me to-night, and now I suppose you are willing, before Mr. Van Buren, to ratify your promise to give me a three thousand dollar clerkship in your court."

"I never made such a promise—it's a d—d lie, and you know it," declared the commissioner, with irate emphasis.

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"It's the truth, and if you say it is not, you are a d—d liar," retorted McNulty, with fierce indignation.

"Don't you dare talk that way to me," said the commissioner, and with the words he made a quick move to strike McNulty.

McNulty dodged the blow, and like a flash drew a pistol from his hip-pocket. Van Buren was too quick for him and knocked his pistol-hand upward. The pistol went off, the bullet crashing into the ceiling. Van Buren snatched the weapon from the young man's hand. The roar of the pistol produced instant commotion in the poker-room and a general questioning as to the cause of the firing, but no explanation was given. A few moments later McNulty was hustled with all possible rapidity by two policemen to the nearest station-house.

"What does all this mean?" the commissioner demanded of Van Buren. Van Buren told him the story as he got it from McNulty.

"I didn't win his money; I'm a loser on the game. He's been buncoed. Find out his friend's name."

Van Buren went to the station-house, and McNulty told him that the friend was a well-known bookmaker whom he had met at the Juniata Club, and who sat in the game where he lost his money and was the heavy winner. Van Buren at once reported back to Commissioner Mahoney, who sent word to the station-house to let young McNulty go. He then directed one of his lieutenants to go to the bookmaker and force him to disgorge, which he did, and Van Buren had the pleasure of taking the money back to McNulty.

XII



WHEN Van Buren went home in September for a visit of a few weeks he had not had one law case or client. Still, he had worked hard and he was far from discouraged. He had spent the summer in familiarizing himself with legal and political conditions in New York and in mapping out his course of conduct. He had personally canvassed the Murray Hill district, which was made easier through the concealment by the commissioner that he was to be a candidate for the assembly. "Nothing to be gained by being a summer candidate," advised the commissioner when Van Buren broached the subject to him. "You'll be nominated on the last day the law allows."

Everybody in Schenectady was glad to see Van Buren back home. The old lawyers and politicians welcomed him and asked all about his New York experiences. His mother wanted him all to herself, for it was the first time since his college days that he had been away from her for any length of time.

During his holiday Van Buren went over to Albany one afternoon to the Holland Club to at-

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tend a dinner in honor of a distinguished Albanian who had added a group of bronze statuary to the attractions of Washington Park.

Van Buren always enjoyed the delightful social feuds and gossipings which made life in Albany so interesting. As an outsider, he had become a repository of many of the scandals of the last century, for in Albany a scandal improves with age. In this Albany greatly reminded him of Richmond. On one of these visits to Richmond he was a guest at the dinner of the Virginia State Bar Association. He never enjoyed a dinner more in his life, for next him sat two venerable and distinguished lawyers, one a descendant of Patrick Henry, and the other one of the old Tyler connection, who spent the evening discussing whether the private life of George Washington or Thomas Jefferson was the more scandalous, and each illustrating his point with first-hand anecdotes and illustrations. It was at this dinner that a Charleston lawyer made the speech from which Van Buren had often appropriated the anti-woman's-rights argument.

Speech-making had gone on for several hours. A succession of young Virginia lawyers had had the opportunity, as was the custom, of making their quality and talents known to the bar of the State by responding to the toasts of the judiciary, the State of Virginia, Richmond, Norfolk, Petersburg, and the other judicial circuits of the State. These young orators vied with one another in sounding the praises of Virginia: how that venerable State had established the United States and furnished

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presidents until the other States arrived at years of discretion, how the Supreme Court was a Virginia creation, how Virginia discovered the Declaration of Independence and invented the Constitution of the United States, closing with perorations of the ruin wrought by the civil war, and that Virginia was now poor and prostrate but no less proud and honorable. It was all gravely serious, almost to sadness.

One of the speakers ventured a funny story by telling of the man who stopped his horse in the rain at a railroad crossing to let a Richmond and Danville train go by. A flash of lightning started the horse beyond the driver's control as the train came along. The synchronism of the train and the thunder and lightning resulted in a lawsuit against the railroad company, which the trial judge dismissed on the ground that the Richmond and Danville was not liable for the acts of Providence. This story was ancient enough to entitle it to the respect due to age, but the leader of the Spottsylvania bar thought the humor of the telling out of place. He rose and protested. "The judge of the Spottsylvania circuit is the peer of any judge in the State, sir, and his decision is good law, sir. It is not humor, but law."

This had been the only glimpse of humor in the clouds of oratory until the Charleston lawyer arose after two o'clock in the morning to respond to the toast of "Woman." After saying that the women of South Carolina would not exchange their privileges for rights, he went on with soft accents: "But I am not going to speak about women, sir. In

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South Carolina, sir, we say little about our ladies—the less the better. I have been sitting here listening with admiration and sympathy to the eloquent descriptions of the past glories of Virginia, of what it was a hundred years ago, how it invented our institutions and furnished our presidents and justices, declarations and constitutions until Ohio grew up. And I sorrow over Virginia's reverses, and I feel for the mourners over her downfall and devastation. But for antiquity, sir, you must come to South Carolina. We can sympathize with your recent loss, but with us our old families, sir, have not yet begun to mourn the destruction of the civil war. Our old families, sir, are still suffering from the complete devastation of the great flood, sir."

With a like love for antiquity on the part of old Albanians, Van Buren had become a repository of traditional confidences. The grown-up population of Albany is in the habit of marrying twice, not by the use of modern divorce practices, but in the old-fashioned way. Half of the married population conveniently die, and the remaining quarters remarry to the end that the involved family connections shall be still further complicated. Every remarriage brought about a delightful feud between the children and relatives of the dear departed and those of his or her successor, which rarely added to the revenue of the lawyers, for by common consent such matters merely gave an additional basis for scandal and gossip. Thus one of the collateral connections of a defunct first husband would withdraw Van Buren into a corner of

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some little room and produce an old receipted bill, yellow and worn.

"Look at this old paper which I found on going over some effects of my grandfather, Van Kops." Van Buren looked and saw a cobbler's bill receipted by Cornelius Berlin. "That is the grandfather of the present Colonel Berlin, whose second marriage is doubtless known to you. His grandfather mended my grandfather's shoes."

For the satisfactory delivery of such conferences, a comparative outsider was needed, and Van Buren's sense of humor was developed without expense to his popularity.

The dinner at the Holland Club that night was excellent. The descendants of the old Dutch kept up the traditions of good cooking and straight drinking which they inherited. In the centre of the table was a miniature of the statuary which the distinguished Albanian aforesaid had donated to Washington Park—a bronze group depicting the finding of Moses in the bulrushes. The bulrushes were so arranged as to throw sprays of water in the air, meeting over little Moses, and the sculptor had taken Colonel G. Humphrey Ring, the rich merchant who paid for the group, as a model for the Egyptian high-priest who was supposed to be little Moses' discoverer. The speeches all included a eulogy of G. Humphrey Ring, and the dinner went along most peaceably until a young lawyer attempted poetry, and closed his response to the toast of "The Bar" with the suggestion that the honored guest and host should rise and sing a little

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ditty, which he had composed, and which ended with the refrain:

“I am G. Humphrey Ring, I am,
For statuary I don't give a damn;
But isn't it a beautiful thing
To know that I am G. Humphrey Ring?”

This little episode might have been passed over if another youngster, in responding to the toast to “The Press,” had not become mellow over the auspicious occasion and closed his speech with this peroration:

“Our honored host is older than I am, but I have always looked up to him. I have heard my grandfather tell my father about his father. Back in the fifties it was, and, as I said, I heard my grandfather tell my father that every evening when my grandfather walked up State Street from his office he passed the Ring store and looked in the window. It was not such a big store then. I've often heard my grandfather tell my father that the store was the front room, and the dining-room and the kitchen were the back room, and the family lived up-stairs. But that was a long time ago, long before my time. But, as I said, I have often heard my grandfather tell my father that every night at the close of business Mr. Ring would put all his account-books and money in an old-fashioned, brass-bound chest and sit on the chest and smoke his pipe. And my grandfather said to my father, ‘Every evening when I see Mr. Ring sitting on that chest I say to myself, there is an honest man; he will succeed.’ That prediction has come true.

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Every prediction my grandfather ever made to my father, or any one else, came true. When I look at Colonel G. Humphrey Ring sitting at the head of this table it makes me think of my grandfather, and of what my grandfather said to my father years ago."

Here the speaker's emotions changed to moisture, and, sitting down, he reclined his head on the table and sobbed himself to sleep. Some of the diners were inclined to jest at this turn in the speech-making, but the descendants of the old Albanians understood that real feeling could not be better expressed.

Van Buren did not stay until the end of the dinner. One effect of his New York life had been to make him look with disfavor on the kind of drinking that manifests itself in speech and action. He had noticed that all the political leaders were abstemious, several of them never drinking anything stronger than mineral water in public. Indeed, he had seen much less intoxication in New York City, in the clubs or on the street, than in either Schenectady or Albany. Neither was the same consideration shown a man who overdrank. At the Holland Club, for instance, one of the founders had developed the afternoon-cocktail habit to the extent that he frequently went to his table in the dining-room with his hat and overcoat on and sat there talking to himself oblivious of his dinner. No one thought of changing such an established habit, and when the founder contracted a further habit of slipping on the waxed stairway, and falling from the dining-room to the floor below, the house com-

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mittee had the stairway carpeted, and one of the waiters was detailed to see that the esteemed founder was safely conducted down-stairs. It was very thoughtful of the house committee, and doubtless the founder was entitled to consideration as his falls were a cause of apprehension to several nervous members.

XIII



THE day after the statutory dinner Van Buren called on Senator Marlow to have a talk with him. He regarded the senator as his political mentor, and, together with the other leaders of the party in Schenectady, was accustomed to ask the senator's advice on all political matters. These consultations took place at the law-office, rarely at the senator's house. Miss Marlow had outgrown the little office as a playground, but she would often drive down the hill late in the afternoon to bring her father home to dinner. Van Buren reached the senator's office as Miss Marlow was stepping out of her victoria. He accompanied her up the steps to the office.

"I fear your call conflicts with mine," he said.

"How uncomplimentary! You should be congratulating yourself on your good-fortune."

"I do; but I came for advice, and it looks as if office hours were now over."

"It is office hours all the time with father if it is politics. If you come to see him about a law case it is too late. He calls law work and politics pleasure, though I think he works harder at politics than law."

"Isn't that the way with most of us? It's an American fault to make work of our pleasures."

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"On the other hand, why not make our work a pleasure?"

"Then one's whole life would be work."

"Isn't it—or, rather, should it not be?"

Miss Marlow took Van Buren in through the private door instead of through the general office. They found Senator Marlow finishing a legal brief. "Here's the walking delegate of the Marlow Union," he greeted her.

"Five o'clock. No overtime, father."

"Glad to see you, Van Buren," said the senator, shaking hands. "I hear you have moved to New York. We shall miss you in Schenectady. What will we do, with the old leaders dying off and you youngsters moving away?"

"That's what I came to see you about, senator. I am going to New York more for politics than for business reasons. I think there is more of an opening and more scope."

"A man's scope isn't so much a matter of his environment as of himself."

"There, father, don't lecture Mr. Van Buren," said Miss Marlow. "He is tired of our poor little excitements. What have Albany and Schenectady to offer? I don't blame him. Maybe some day you'll tire of politics and we'll all go to New York. Mr. Van Buren will be the mayor, and he'll arrange a reception to us in the city hall, and I'll spend my days shopping and go to the opera every evening."

"I hope you won't deprive me of the pleasure of welcoming you until I am mayor."

"We shall be glad to be welcomed any time, but

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you must be mayor, and have the mounted police meet us at the Grand Central Station. That is my one ambition, to be escorted by a squad of big New York policemen."

"I'll call out the national guard and the fire department, too."

"You'll have no opportunity to talk politics here, Van Buren. Come along and dine with us," said the senator.

"First we'll all go to the park and see Colonel Ring's statuary," suggested Miss Marlow.

"I heard all about it at Colonel Ring's dinner last night, but I've seen only the miniature," said Van Buren.

The three went out through the private door to the victoria and drove up State Street to the park. The noise of the wheels over the paving-stones prevented continuous conversation. Van Buren sat facing Miss Marlow, asking himself why he had never noticed her before. He had seen her often at the Albany assemblies, and occasionally she had come over to Schenectady to the college dances. At both she was a favorite, always surrounded by men and the recipient of constant attention. Van Buren had attributed this, so far as he had thought about it at all, to her father's prominence and the general desire of young men to be in his good graces. This afternoon Van Buren changed his mind.

Miss Marlow was good to look upon. She was tall and square-shouldered. Her hair was a perilous shade of red that her black eyebrows and violet eyes made beautiful. It would not stay in place,

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and stray strands fluttered loose from time to time, which she tucked back with an unconscious movement of her hand. Her gloves were like a man's. Her dress was of the same cheviot plaid a man might wear. Her hat and her tie were feminine, for no woman can tie a four-in-hand like a man. When she talked she looked Van Buren in the eyes, a habit she inherited from her father. Her eyes talked more than her tongue; at least, that was Van Buren's impression. Without effort she made him feel at his ease, and he was convinced that she desired his friendship and admiration. It was something in her manner and attitude, and Van Buren was flattered that he was the object, or the cause, of such a delightful attitude. He had not yet learned that Miss Marlow bore that attitude towards all men, another inheritance from her father, who made every man who came to the little office feel that his support and his friendship were desired above all things by Daniel Marlow.

The victoria stopped in front of the bronze Moses and bulrushes before Van Buren had decided what his attitude towards Miss Marlow should be. With all her friendliness she was imposing. Her developed figure and the ringlets and pose of her head suggested one of the goddesses in a mythological group near by. But Van Buren could not make up his mind which goddess, and then he did not think any goddess had ever had exactly her shade of red hair; it was too human, a sort of a warm, purple, blood red, and then came the thought that maybe Miss Marlow had a blood-thirsty side and looked on all men as possible prey. It was a bad habit,

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this of Van Buren's, of letting his mind roam on analogical tours.

"You'll never do in politics, Mr. Van Buren," broke in Miss Marlow. "You must pay attention. Here is Moses, and I don't know what your reverie is about; but to succeed you must always concentrate your thoughts on the matter in hand, and that is Moses. Where do you think Moses would stand on the reapportionment bill?"

"He would have to be unanimous. That is one thing in favor of one-man power."

"It is so much easier for one man to make up his mind than a caucus."

"That depends on the man and the kind of mind he has. I don't know about a woman's mind."

"That is simple. A woman doesn't make up her mind. Her mind makes up itself, and a committee of women never work together so well as a committee of men, because they try to do things men-fashion, and I do not think women appear to their best advantage as imitators of men."

"Yes, all men are alike, and the larger the committee the easier it is to control it. Every woman is different, and, therefore, it is easier to manage one woman and impossible to control several."

"What an expression, Mr. Van Buren, 'Managing one woman!' Was there ever a man who did that?"

"Many men have thought they did."

"Just because so many women find that is the easiest way to manage their fathers and husbands and brothers. It is easier to get a man to do what you want if you put the idea in his head and let him believe he is doing it."

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"Do you apply those methods to me?" asked Senator Marlow.

"Certainly not, father, you always do what I want without my having to manage you."

They drove around the park on both sides of the pretty lake, and back through Englewood Place, where a corner, which seems to be in the park, has been reserved for the residences of wealthy Albanians.

"There is something I don't think you would see anywhere else," said Van Buren. "It is virtually allowing people to live in the park."

"Are you envious?" asked Miss Marlow. "I shouldn't care to live there. It is too isolated. The park colony is placed on the hill like targets for spiteful comment."

"Maybe they enjoy it. Some people do not care to have what nobody else wants, and they measure its value by the number desiring it."

"Is that an admission or an abstraction?"

"Both. It is human nature to enjoy the envy of others. And I confess that I am not indifferent to public approbation."

"There are all kinds of approbation, the kind you create and the kind you cater to."

"I like to please those I am with. It pleases me to know I am pleasing them."

"But there are so many shades of pleasing people. They may like you from pity or sympathy or admiration or necessity."

"Don't you like to be liked?"

"Yes, and no. It depends how and where, and by whom. A man takes flattery as a child wants

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its molasses, spread on thick where it can be seen and touched as well as tasted. A woman prefers unconscious flattery, from another woman rather than a man. Most men flatter as if they were at work, condescendingly performing a conscientious duty. It rasps me."

Senator Marlow's thoughts were far off. "Did you see much of Mr. Coulter in New York?" he asked. "What is the feeling in the city? The action of the National Convention strengthens us everywhere else. We should carry the State this fall."

"I think Mr. Coulter will do his best. Tammany has learned by experience that bolting is unprofitable."

"I don't fear a bolt, but lukewarmness. Sometimes open opposition is better than torpidity."

The victoria stopped in front of the Elk Street house. Mrs. Marlow was pouring tea for several of her callers. Van Buren went in to pay his respects to her. He stood in awe of Mrs. Marlow. He took his tea and nibbled one of the little cookies. Mrs. Marlow always served little cookies made up from an old Dutch recipe, and there was a toy carafe of rum, and another of schnapps, which went better with tea than cream and sugar. There were several women, a general, the State comptroller, a bishop from Boston, and an Englishman—there was always a foreigner. Van Buren did not fit in comfortably, and as soon as he could he drifted back to Senator Marlow's little library and joined the senator and Miss Marlow at work.

"Come in, Van Buren. That's all to-day, Mary,"

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the senator said. "We go over our little matters here. Mary is a better politician than I am."


Miss Marlow went up-stairs to dress for dinner, and Van Buren told the senator his plans and purposes. The senator thought it doubtful that he could be elected to the assembly from the Murray Hill district. The Republican majority was too large, and in a Presidential year the tendency is to vote the straight ticket.

"Still, it 'll be a good experience for you," added the senator. "Only don't be a candidate too often, and a term or two in the legislature is enough for any young man. Attend to your profession. Be active in politics, but keep out of office. Be known as a lawyer in politics instead of a politician who has a law-office."

"Commissioner Mahoney thinks there is a fair prospect of my election. It is a Mugwump district, and the present Republican assemblyman is unpopular with them."

"Why not have our Mugwump friends nominate an assembly candidate of their own. Suggest it to the commissioner. But, of course, not connecting me with the suggestion. That is a difficulty we have with our Tammany friends. Their methods are somewhat crude. Forethought and skilful arrangements may bring about success where brute strength and forcible methods fail."

XIV

 HERE was no guest at dinner besides Van Buren. Miss Marlow had changed her cheviot street-dress for a soft black-and-white dinner-gown, which gave somewhat the effect of sitting for a portrait. She wore no jewelry, no rings even. There was nothing to draw attention from the purple red hair, the dark eyebrows and violet eyes from which Van Buren could not keep his gaze. He knew at once that Miss Marlow was conscious of his admiration, and he feared that the knowledge extended to her father and mother. Mrs. Marlow conducted the dinner conversation. It concerned general topics, Church and State, the growing social difference between the St. Paul's and the cathedral families, which had not yet extended to Schenectady, and the recent remarriages of several widows and widowers, interspersed with comments on the proposed legislation to make New York's corporation laws more liberal and the probable result of the Presidential election. The talk was somewhat mechanical, Mrs. Marlow leading from topic to topic, Miss Marlow insisting on Van Buren giving his views, the senator conducting his own train of thought, and catching and replying to a phrase now and then, and Van Buren thinking all

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the while how remarkable it was that he had never before noticed how beautiful was Miss Marlow's coloring, and that nothing was so effective as a black-and-white dinner-gown. He began to suspect that he was hardly civilly coherent in his replies, and it was with relief that he welcomed the dinner's end. Mrs. Marlow expected a committee of ladies to hold a woman's auxiliary meeting, and the senator was in the habit of walking up to the Holland Club after dinner. He disliked men to call at his house on political errands, and he made it a point to be found at his office, or at the club for an hour or so in the evening, to prevent being sought for in his home.

Miss Marlow took Van Buren into her father's den. "You may smoke here," she said. "Father smokes all over the house when he smokes at all. But that is so seldom. I don't think he knows one cigar from another."

"I was never so thankful that I am in politics as to-night. My eyes have been opened to many things," blurted Van Buren.

"That is more enigmatical than your greeting this afternoon."

"I don't know what possessed me at the dinner-table. I feel that I should apologize to your mother and father."

"Why am I excluded?"

"You are not. You should make my excuses for me, for you are the cause of the necessity for them. I haven't a versatile mind, and my thoughts and speech refuse to run in different lines."

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"That is a difficulty I never noticed in you before."

"Thank you. I didn't think you had ever noticed me at all before."

"I've often admired you from afar off. You looked so statesmanlike." Miss Marlow laughed satirically. "I couldn't very well send an embassy to you when I have seen you. Could I send you word that Miss Marlow begged the honor of the next waltz?"

"I never thought I was a prig."

"You always looked so superior to frivolous things. Maybe it's as well you didn't come near me. I don't approve of that condescending manner which I rather judge from this evening you reserve for the Albany assemblies. I will not be patronized."

"Who would dare? I am sure I should never permit the presumptuous thought. I would like to tell you what I really was thinking to-night."

"Don't. Never tell tales. Besides, I think I know, and you might tell me differently, which would not please me so well."

"You might tell me, then, and let me amend my thoughts."

"There speaks the next assemblyman from Murray Hill. Amendments are not now in order."

"I wish I could apply political methods to you," retorted Van Buren, earnestly. "I would call a caucus and submit my resolutions."

"Please, Mr. Van Buren, leave out politics. I was brought up on politics, and I wish the men I know would talk about something else. There is Captain Focht, of Troy—every time I meet him at

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a dance or at tea he gives me an account of the Rensselaer County convention or the Greenbush primaries. I think he tutors up on purpose. Still, it is quite a compliment to have a man try to please you. Only he knows so much more about golf than politics, and I should rather talk golf."

"Somehow I never thought of talking golf to you."

"Try it."

"Once upon a time, when you were a little girl, golf was imported to Albany. I happened to be out at the Country Club the day the golf clubs arrived. They had been imported, for, so far as I knew, no golf clubs were made in this country then. Four or five of us were there and tried them. There were only two sets of clubs. After I had broken three in unsuccessful attempts to hit the ball, it was suggested that unless I desired to suspend the playing until later in the season I should suspend until the next importation. I have never played since. I came to the conclusion that an appreciative audience is as necessary for the success of a golf club as the players, and since my first efforts I have tried my best to be the appreciative audience."

"I am sure you succeeded."

"My capacity for appreciation is not limited to golf."

"I suppose it extends to politics, though I fancied this afternoon it was lacking as to statuary."

"It extends to dinner-gowns. By-the-way, have you ever had your portrait painted? When you do, keep this gown for the occasion. I shall spend hours at the gallery where it is exhibited."

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"I can give you my dressmaker's address. She will be glad to duplicate it."

"An imitation is never the same. Two girls may wear the same size of gloves, but it doesn't follow that their hands look alike."

"Sagacious man!"

Van Buren's eyes were fixed on the gleam of the purply red hair. There were so many things about it he wanted to say. He had an unreasoning impulse to reach over and take out the pins which held it high on her head and let the coiled mass fall. He wondered if it would reach below her waist. He thought it would. He imagined she knew what he was thinking, and was laughing at the thought. She seemed to be daring him to do it. "Some day I will," he found himself saying to himself, and almost abruptly he arose and departed, surprised at his timidity in fleeing from a self-suggested temptation.

From the Marlow house Van Buren went to the club, and then took the car for the long ride to Schenectady. On the way he began to get acquainted with a new side of himself. Van Buren was not without knowledge of women, and he had gone through the usual experiences with them; but he had never been desperately in love with one of them, and, so far as matrimony was concerned, it was too far off to be tangible. He had supposed, without giving the matter serious thought, that some day, when he was famous and rich, he would marry. Anyhow, it was not a necessity to be married. Politics was much more important. Still, he had never felt an impulse before to pull out any

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other girl's hair-pins. His thoughts would run on that.

He turned over in his drowsy mind what he would have done with Mary Marlow that evening had they been alone on a desert island. First, he would have taken out the pins from her hair, one by one, with a long interval between. He did not know how many there were, but he hoped there were hundreds. The mass of gleaming red might fall all of a sudden, or, more likely, it would unroll coil by coil, strand by strand, tendril by tendril. He would prefer the last. Yes, he would be careful to take out the pins slowly, and with judgment, to prolong the pleasure. Then, when it was all uncoiled, he would measure it. He would take the smallest measure in the world, so that the measuring would last a long time, and he would have her hold the end of the largest coil while he did the measuring, and when he had measured the coil he would kiss every hair separately, not her lips, that was far in the future, and he was young, and going to live for years, and it would be foolish to do everything at once and leave nothing for the future. It would be sufficient for the present to kiss every hair. He wondered if cannibals ate hair. Probably not. It was too good to eat, for that would be the end of it. He forced his thoughts to stop there, and then he recalled how he had read, somewhere, that everybody's head had hundreds of thousands of hairs, and that black heads had not so many hairs as red, and he was glad it was so. He slept until the car reached Schenectady.

Next morning, at breakfast, Van Buren could

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tell that his mother had something to say to him.

"Well, what is it this morning, mumsie?" he asked.

"I have been thinking it is time for you to be more settled. You are getting older, and you have marked out your course in New York. You should have your own home there."

"This home here is good enough for me, and I don't want anybody but you."

"It isn't natural or safe for you to board around by yourself. You should have an anchorage and home ties."

"And give hostages to fortune."

"Yes, I am old-fashioned enough to believe that no home is happy without children. No woman loses her baby-love. It would make me happy to see my grandchildren around me."

"Wait till I make my millions, mumsie, dear."

"Nothing of the kind. Young people had far better marry young and grow up together. You have money enough."

"All right, mother. You fix it all up, and notify me when you've found a wife for me. Seriously, though, don't you think we'd better wait awhile? Maybe I'll be back in Schenectady for good this time next year, then we'll talk it over again."

Van Buren went out to his old office, where he was closing up the last of his Schenectady law business. He kept on thinking about Miss Marlow. Was he in love with her? Why should his mother broach the subject of marriage to him just at this time?

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On the whole, the best thing he thought he could do was to go back to New York and attend to politics. He stayed the week out at Schenectady, until the close of the fall term of court, tried the last of his Schenectady cases, went to church Sunday morning with his mother and sat in the family pew, and on Monday returned to New York. The Friday previous he had made his dinner call at the Marlow's. It was a fine, pleasant afternoon, and a few minutes before five o'clock he rang the Marlow door-bell.

"The ladies are not at home," said the butler.

Van Buren had counted on Miss Marlow's being out driving with her father, and he was not sorry Mrs. Marlow was not receiving. If his careful calculations had erred he would not have blamed himself for what might have happened. As it was, he left his card; his social conscience was clear and the fever in his head was allayed—for the time being.

XV



THE boarding-house Commissioner Mahoney had selected for Van Buren was on Thirty-ninth Street between Lexington and Park avenues, in a strong Republican election district. It was managed by Mrs. Forster, a widow—somehow boarding-houses are a widow's monopoly—and it was for "gentlemen only." Mrs. Forster explained that she did not want women around; they were too much trouble, lunching in the house and at home to dinner. Few of the boarders ate any other meal in the house than breakfast. It was convenient to the University Club, where Van Buren had his name transferred from the non-resident to the resident list. Partly out of curiosity, and also to see the different sides of life in the district, he made a round of all the restaurants for dinner, from the bigger hotels to the little French and Chinese places on Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth streets. There was little to be done in his law-office. To pass away the time he procured copies of the election returns of the last ten years and sets of the maps of the city by election districts, which the board of elections publishes, and studied them until he was fully familiar with the neighborhoods and their majorities. From day to day he

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visited the district courts and the police courts, which to him were the most interesting phases of court life, although he decided he did not care for that kind of law practice.

Many of the court clerks were members of the Juniata Club, and when he first began dropping in at the police courts the clerks undertook to put him in the way of business. The defendants in police courts he found were of two classes, those with money and those without. The defendant who had no money or friends was practically convicted from the start. His progress from the police court to the penitentiary, or State's prison, was merely a matter of time, and the energy of some assistant district attorney. His guilt or innocence of the particular offence with which he was charged interested nobody. A burglary, a theft, or an assault had been committed, and the police felt it necessary that some one should be convicted. Nine times out of ten the defendant was guilty, but no distinction was made in the tenth case.

Where the defendant had money the processes of the law were systematically used to get it away from him. Beginning with the policeman who made the arrest, money was taken. At the station-house a professional bondsman could be had by paying for it, the sergeant getting part of the charge. If the defendant's own lawyer was not at hand, the police and the court clerks would furnish a lawyer who secured adjournments of the examinations as long as the money held out. Witnesses to establish an alibi or any other defence were easily secured. Out on bail, the defendant could have his

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trial postponed almost indefinitely, unless too much newspaper attention was drawn to the case or some other reason stirred up the district attorney's office to activity. Usually the delays could be prolonged as long as the money held out.

Van Buren learned that every interest affected by the penal code had well-organized legal machinery to prevent the enforcement of the law. Even the wholesale merchants who used the sidewalks for storage, in violation of the city ordinances, had their violations of the law systematized, while the policy men, the gamblers, and the keepers of all-night resorts had bondsmen, lawyers, court and police officials in receipt of regular salaries to attend to their interests. To such an extent was this system of fees and salaries developed that the alliance of lawyers, bondsmen, police and court clerks was always on the lookout for some new source of revenue or for a pretext of additional charges from these established industries. The combination rather welcomed outside crusades and the societies with many names which sporadically discovered that policy was sold, that such games as faro and roulette were played for money, and that intoxicating liquors were sold after one o'clock at night. Every agitation was a pretext of additional charges.

Occasionally Van Buren would go down to Paradise Park to call on Judge Murphy and his family. It was a part of New York which never tired him. Whenever he felt despondent he would walk along Division Street, under the shadow of the elevated, and look in the blocks of windows where the East Side girls buy their finery, and watch the wistful

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faces of the girls looking in the windows, envying the possessors of what they could not buy, the women barkers and pullers-in discriminating accurately between the possible purchasers and the passers-by without money. Then he would turn on into Hester Street, where no man except the police was within a head of his height, to see the great out-door market, the long-bearded Poles with their push-carts, the married women with shorn heads and hideous wigs to make sure they would be attractive to no one but their husbands, the younger generation embarking in trade with a curb-stone stock of goods, but within a few years to join those of their race who already monopolize the Broadway wholesale district. In a few minutes he would make the round of these nationalities, through Chinatown, and back to the Italians of Mulberry and Mott streets, the former strongholds of the Irish, who have gone farther up town, leaving only a Catholic church and an Irish undertaker as their relics. The sight of all this, of the melancholy of the old men and married women, contrasted with the joyousness of the American-born generation, always impressed Van Buren with a better opinion of his own prospects, and, somehow, gave him hope and more confidence of his own future.

Shortly after his return to New York Van Buren had his first New York law case. Several of Commissioner Mahoney's district committeemen were saloon-keepers. One of these, Kehoe by name, had a costly place on Sixth Avenue, and still owned the saloon on Cherry Hill where he began as a bartender. Kehoe came to Van Buren's office one day

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and aired a grievance. Because the business demanded it, he explained (though the real reason was that he felt more at home and comfortable in the old place), he was in the habit of spending one or two days in the week on Cherry Hill. Some years before, on one of these visiting days, a longshoreman had persisted in eating a disproportionate amount of free lunch. "A five-cent drink doesn't entitle you to a course dinner," Mr. Kehoe had objected. The longshoreman retorted with a few choice epithets such as are customary on Cherry Hill.

"I couldn't lower myself to his vocabulary," Mr. Kehoe told Van Buren, "so I just stepped from behind the bar and kicked him out the door. He stands on the street blaspheming me, and not wanting to soil my hands with him further, I picked up one of the knives from the lunch table and prodded him a little in the shoulder. Some skin lawyer gets hold of him and has him sue me for ten thousand dollars for that little prod. My lawyer goes and dies this week, and the case is coming up for trial next Tuesday."

Upon investigation Van Buren found that Mr. Kehoe had come out, knife in hand, and chased the longshoreman the length of a block. While the longshoreman was running Mr. Kehoe inserted the knife half its length back of his shoulder-blade. The man was in the hospital some weeks, and it was by a narrow margin he did not die. As it was, his shoulder was crippled and he could not work at his trade. He had sued for damages for the injury. There were thirty or forty witnesses and no disputing the facts. Mr. Kehoe had lost his temper,

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and, as a legal question, Van Buren doubted whether the taking of a few extra handfuls of crackers, cheese, and pickles justified the stabbing of a fleeing man. He had never heard of a lawsuit like that in Schenectady. It behooved him to do his best, for it was his first New York case, and he went through all his law-books looking up authorities. The more he looked up the more hopeless the case appeared. There was no real question as to the facts; and the law was hopeless. He reflected that the less one tried to contradict indisputable facts, and the more one steered away from equally indisputable law, the better for his client.

The trial began the next Thursday in the Supreme Court. Van Buren and his client appeared without a witness. The plaintiff was accompanied by a large section of the population of Cherry Hill. In choosing the jury Van Buren took pains to secure well-dressed business men with up-town residences. To prevent the calling of the hospital physicians, or of any other witnesses than the Cherry Hill inhabitants, Van Buren stated to the court that he would admit the injuries and their extent to be as alleged in the complaint. The trial proceeded, and witness after witness testified to seeing Kehoe chase the longshoreman and stab him in the back. They told their stories with gusto in full detail. Van Buren asked every witness the same questions, and, except to one question, he received the same answers, as follows:

"What ward do you live in?"

"The fourth."

"Known as the bloody fourth, isn't it?"

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"Yah."

"Who is the alderman?"

"Moriarity."

"A scene like that which you have described is a frequent sight in that neighborhood, is it not?"

"Sure it is."

"You say the defendant, Mr. Kehoe, had a knife in his hand. What kind of a knife was it?"

On this point there was a conflict of testimony. All the witnesses said it was a knife from the lunch counter, but some said it was the bread-knife and others swore it was the cheese-knife. Van Buren had a sheet of legal-cap paper, and as each witness testified he made a tally on the sheet as to which kind of knife was used. The jury, the judge, and the spectators became more and more interested as Van Buren continued, asking every witness the same question and making his tallies. He held the paper so that the jury could see that he had written "bread" on one tally line, and "cheese" on the other.

Thirty-five eye-witnesses testified one after the other to the details of the assault. The trial of the case had lasted over three days, and the judge and the jury were tired and irritated, and hostile to the plaintiff's lawyer. The judge had suggested several times that there was no necessity for all these witnesses repeating the same story, but the plaintiff's counsel had prepared the case thoroughly on the theory of enlarging the verdict by the overwhelming evidence.

When the longshoreman's case was closed Van Buren arose, and, addressing the court and jury, explained that he had no desire to tire them further

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by calling additional witnesses, for his witnesses, indeed, the defendant himself, had nothing to say in dispute of what had been testified to. He thought that plaintiff's able counsel had omitted the important features of the case, and he therefore had sought to bring these facts before the jury.

"Gentlemen of the jury," he continued, "you will note that all the witnesses were in accord in their answers to all the questions which I asked except the last, and I assume that with this unanimity of statement out of the mouths of the plaintiff's own witnesses you will regard it as a settled fact that these occurrences here described took place in the famous fourth ward, of which the well-known Moriarity is the alderman and boss, and that such happenings are in that neighborhood matters of frequent and casual occurrence. In such neighborhoods as you gentlemen reside in it might be regarded as an unusual and serious thing for one gentleman to insert a knife, no matter what the nature or character of the knife, into the person of another gentleman. But in passing upon an event of this nature you must consider where it occurred and the character of the people and the neighborhood, and you will note that according to this multitude of witnesses this was nothing but a bit of common, every-day pleasantry, a sort of repartee in which the inhabitants of Cherry Hill frequently indulge.

"The important—in fact, the only discrepancy in the testimony, is as to the character of the knife. On that point I have kept careful tally, and the result shows that nineteen witnesses testified that it was the bread-knife and sixteen that it was the

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cheese-knife. The witnesses on both sides are equally earnest and positive in their statements, and the court will tell you, as a matter of law, that preponderance of evidence is not numerical preponderance but preponderance of credibility. I must confess that on this one important question I am myself in grave doubt. It is the province of the jury to pass upon it, and to my mind it is the only question in the case. You will pardon me for quoting poetry, but there is a gem I heard at the rooms of the Moriarity Association the other evening which I think well applies to this case:

“In the fourth ward, the fourth ward,
Where the big majority
Gives the people authority,
They vote for Moriarity,
And Moriarity rules the roost.”

The jury and the court alike were roaring with laughter at the close of his speech. The plaintiff's counsel rose and made an elaborate argument. The jury went out after a short and colorless charge by the judge and returned in a few minutes with a verdict for the defendant, and with an additional statement that they believed it was the bread-knife. It was disclosed later that at the resorts which the members of the jury were accustomed to frequent only a bread-knife was used, and that to dis sever the cheese there was a cheese-scoop and not a knife.

This victory started Van Buren on a tide of law business that was little to his taste. Kehoe brought him other saloon-keepers for clients, and it was intimated to him that he could become attorney

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for the East Side Saloon-keepers' Association if he so desired, but he declined the proffer. The fees he received were welcome, for their receipt gave him a feeling that he was not an absolute failure as a lawyer, and, though the income he received from his father's estate was sufficient for his support in the modest way he was living, he was gratified to know that he was not dependent upon it.

The political campaign took most of his time. It had started early, as always in Presidential years. Van Buren frequently visited the national headquarters of both parties and became acquainted with the chairmen and studied the party machinery. It was a vast business, with the system of a factory or a trunk-line railroad. What amazed him was the size of the campaign funds and the universality of contribution to them by large corporations and individuals with business interests of magnitude. It appeared that every railroad, manufacturing, business, and financial interest sent contributions of from five thousand dollars to one hundred thousand dollars to one committee or the other, and frequently to both. It was regarded as policy to put both political parties under such obligations that in no event should unfriendly legislation or hostile action by public officials be feared. The size of these contributions was some measure of the returns expected, for the money was paid, not on account of the political beliefs of the contributors, but simply as business investments on which profitable returns were to be had, the same as money spent for plant or betterments.

It was planned by Commissioner Mahoney not to

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nominate Van Buren for the assembly until the last day the nomination law allowed, as the renomination of the Republican assemblyman might open the way to an independent Mugwump candidate. Van Buren adopted Senator Marlow's suggestion and Commissioner Mahoney took up the idea with favor. A young lawyer, Thomas Montgomery, who had professional affiliations with a railroad company which was indebted to the commissioner for past favors and hoped for more, formed an independent Republican association, which fitted up club-rooms, and as soon as the Republicans had renominated Assemblyman Thurton the independent Republican association held a mass-meeting and nominated Montgomery. An active and expensive campaign in Montgomery's behalf was at once started. The independent Republican association also adopted resolutions endorsing the Democratic candidate for President and denouncing Tammany and the Tammany city and county tickets. All this was arranged by Commissioner Mahoney through the general counsel of the railroad company, which paid the expenses and received credit for the same from the Democratic national committee and the Tammany district committee. Van Buren saw the resolutions before they were presented to the mass-meeting and asked the reason for the discrimination against the city and county ticket.

"That will be elected beyond question," explained the commissioner. "There is no independent Democratic movement this year. They are afraid it might imperil the national ticket, and it is good politics to roast Tammany in this district. It shows

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the good faith and high principles of Montgomery and his followers. They are against all the machines and all the bosses."

His visits to Judge Murphy and his experiences at the district associations and picnics had given Van Buren the idea that Tammany was composed of the lower element of New York's population. The opportunity he had to see the inside workings of the campaign opened his eyes. He found that at least half of the rich and prominent men in New York were Tammany sympathizers and active in its counsels. They did not go to the Bowery Christmas dinners or the Maple Park picnics, for there was no occasion to, but they did furnish the campaign fund and substantial business support. The Republican financial strength came from merchants and manufacturers who were affected by the tariff and not by the local government. The traction and gas-light companies, the produce dealers, the builders, the contractors, and the local business interests generally preferred Tammany. It was not a matter of principle with them, but they had found by experience they could get along better with Tammany. Arrangements made with Mr. Coulter or with the district leader were good and definite. Such an understanding covered the police and all the city departments, while with a Republican or a reform local administration there was constant trouble. The precinct police captain might be appeased and police headquarters cause difficulties; the street cleaning department might be propitiated and the rubbish and ashes removed, only to have the bureau of encumbrances object to the use of the sidewalks;

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or the department of public works dig a hole in the street and keep it open to the hinderance of trucking and delivering. The water department, the board of health, and all the other branches of the municipal government were each going along on its own hook, making it necessary to keep a lawyer constantly driving, cajoling, and defending at more expense and much greater trouble than under Tammany. Tammany had systematized official lenity and permitted evasion of the law on ordinary business principles. With a reform or Republican administration there was no system and no head, only a horde of disconnected departments and officials, a few honest zealots, the majority trying to make all they could and counting on being turned out at the earliest opportunity.

XVI



THE real business of the campaign was not conducted at Tammany Hall or the Democratic Club any more than the important affairs of a bank or a railroad are decided in the public rooms in the presence of the clerks. Mr. Coulter was the deciding power, the head of the board of directors. Four or five men were his advisers and consultants, and none of them was an office-holder or a district leader. One was the former president of a street railroad company, who had retired from active business with a fortune, and who kept in politics because he liked it, as well as to protect his investments. Another was a lawyer, whose income was ten times the salary of any city officer, and through whom large fees were collected in a strictly professional way from corporations desiring favors, which fees, it was understood, Mr. Coulter shared. A third was one of the biggest contractors in the city, who took the largest jobs in his own name and parcelled out the others to the members of the contractors' association, a sort of local trust. The fourth was a leading merchant, the owner of several department stores, and the head of a large manufacturing concern, in none of which his name appeared. These were the real advisory board of

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Tammany, a board which any corporation might have envied for their standing, experience, sound judgment, and success.

The mass of patronage these men controlled was almost as vast as that of the city of New York, and it was used to like political effect. The conductors, the drivers, the motormen, the laborers, the tens of thousands of employés of the street railroads, were appointed only on the recommendation of a district leader. It did not mean that an unfit or incompetent man would be put to work or kept employed, but only that he must have the endorsement of the Tammany leader of the district where he lived, and to get that insured his political fealty. In like manner with the thousands of men working for the contractors and, to a less extent, for the builders. In skilled trades and in department stores this practice could not be so thoroughly carried out, but it obtained to as great an extent as profitable business permitted. It was not that the district leaders were allowed to put worthless men to work, but that the endorsement of the district leader was required, and so long as he could furnish competent men no others need apply. It disclosed to Van Buren what was the fact, that the greatest employment agencies in New York are the Tammany district committees, and that the scope of the jobs they can furnish extends to the professions as well: doctors, lawyers, engineers, chemists, and accountants, places for all could be had in or in connection with these great business enterprises, which found an alliance with Tammany profitable.

These conferences between Mr. Coulter and the

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advisory committee usually took place at some hotel or private house in the evening. It was here the city ticket was determined, the candidates from the mayoralty down, the judges and the congressmen. Except in rare instances, where there were personal or corporate reasons, Mr. Coulter did not interfere with district matters, the aldermen and the assemblymen, but above that rank nominations were all passed on by Mr. Coulter himself. The general patronage was divided in like manner, the smaller jobs parcelled out to the districts in a reasonably even division and the big places allotted by Mr. Coulter. It was the same system that Mr. Schwarz employed in his department stores and Mr. Williamson in his railroads: the heads of departments they selected themselves after conference with their general managers, the multitude of smaller places were filled by the department heads.

A great ratification meeting was to be held at Madison Square Garden after the city and county tickets were nominated. Mr. Coulter sent for Van Buren, through the commissioner, and asked him to make the second speech. There were to be four speeches inside the hall—one by a Southern senator, the second by Van Buren, the third by Tammany's leading orator, and the fourth by the candidate for mayor. The commissioner advised Van Buren not to go as a delegate to the Tammany convention, and to keep out of newspaper mention in connection with Tammany affairs, but to make his appearance on the platform in support of the Democratic candidate for President. Following this advice, Van Buren went to the convention as a spectator.

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The convention was as mechanical as a hand-organ. The executive committee had met half an hour before. Mr. Coulter took out of his pocket a slip of paper and read off the names of the candidates they were to nominate, which they immediately and unanimously did. The chairman of the convention was one of those reputable business men who like to see their names in the newspapers. He read an elaborate speech, which had been written for him. A strong-voiced young lawyer read the platform, which endorsed everything it did not denounce, and it was unanimously adopted. The mass of the delegates to the convention did not know whom they were to nominate, although the names on Mr. Coulter's slip of paper began to be whispered around before Congressman Forrest, the official orator of Tammany, took the platform, and, with the same earnest eloquence and sonorous tones with which he would have put the nomination of any other man, sounded the praises and named the name of James Hascott for mayor. He was followed by other orators, aspirants for places in the district attorney's or corporation counsel's office. Mr. Hascott was then unanimously nominated. Next a Hebrew was nominated for president of the board of aldermen, a German for comptroller, an Irishman for sheriff, and a Hungarian, an Italian, a Swede, and a Frenchman for the four coroners, thus giving official recognition, as far as the length of the ticket permitted, to every nationality in New York. The nominations were greeted with uproarious enthusiasms and the convention cheerfully adjourned. All the candidates were organization men, and their

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nomination was a spur to the ambition of every immigrant and his son, an assurance that by faithful political work his name might some day appear on the list and be heralded with like cheers.

At the Madison Square meeting Tammany made its annual bow to the public. The object of this big meeting was not to convert opposition voters, but to create enthusiasm among the district workers. The general committee of every district, headed by the district leader and a brass band, attended in a body. They went far towards filling the hall. On the platform were the hundreds of Tammany vice-presidents and secretaries, selected from the Tammany business men, who regarded this honor as an assurance that they could use the sidewalks with impunity and continue in the enjoyment of other like privileges. The chairman was a retired merchant, whose voice could not be heard but whose speech was not lost, for it had been sent to every newspaper office in advance. A distinguished Southern senator from Virginia delivered an eloquent address, an hour in length, dwelling on the glorious history and traditions of the Democratic party, the Louisiana Purchase, and Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, and his war on the United States Bank, and coming down to the great New-Yorkers, Seymour and Tilden. His speech was scholarly, polished, well-rounded, and as unintelligible to the average Tammany man as if delivered in German or Italian. The audience applauded because the speech was over their heads and they enjoyed the compliment.

Van Buren came next. He had been sitting in

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the rear of the platform next Mr. Coulter, who kept himself in the background. "Talk patriotism to them," said Mr. Coulter. "Give them the kind of speech you made on the Fourth of July." Van Buren did, and it was easier for him to proceed on these lines, for he believed with his heart and soul that real democracy is patriotism. He was greeted with cheers by many of the audience who recalled his Fourth of July speech. He spoke of the great cosmopolitan population of New York, gathered from all quarters of the globe, speaking all tongues, a modern tower of babel, united only in their desire for liberty and for freedom; how their new life opened out to them opportunities and hopes which had been dead within their hearts and the hearts of their fathers, hope for bettering their own condition, hope for their children and their children's children, some one of whom at some future meeting in this hall might be endorsed for the Presidency. To them democracy and freedom were synonyms. Democracy meant the destruction of class distinctions, of individual and corporate privilege, of the officialism and paternalism which they emigrated to escape.

"I learned my democracy at my father's knee," said Van Buren, in closing. "It was taught me with my prayers and my alphabet. It means to me all that government should bring: the blessings of freedom from oppression, liberty of thought, speech, and conscience, the great truths of the Declaration of Independence worked out in practical form." Amid cheers he returned to his seat next to Mr. Coulter, who leaned over and congratulated him. "That's

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it, enthuse them. Make them feel that the United States and the Democratic party are the same thing."

Congressman Forrest followed with a high-sounding attack on the Republican party and its candidates. He was a master of denunciation, and in this speech he excelled. His torrents of eloquence could be heard the length of the hall. A short speech from the candidate for mayor closed the meeting. He assured everybody that he would do what they wanted honestly, conservatively, and conscientiously, that he would enforce the laws without interfering with anybody, and that great public improvements would be made and the tax-rate reduced.

Van Buren's nomination for the assembly came in due course. The Tammany district convention was a miniature of the city convention. A committee from the convention found him in a convenient hotel and brought him back to be notified of his nomination. He thanked them and said he would do his best to be elected. His personal campaign was short and strenuous. He sent out circulars to the voters signed by the best names he and Commissioner Mahoney's corporate friends could obtain, and followed the circulars with personal calls. Many of his college and club friends lived in the district, and he looked them up from the registration list. Evenings he spoke at the various halls and a few times from the tail end of a truck. Commissioner Mahoney had told him that he was not expected to contribute to the campaign fund, and his total expenses scarcely exceeded the five hun-

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dred dollar fee he had charged Kehoe in the bread-knife lawsuit.

Election night Van Buren anxiously sat in the Juniata Club awaiting the result. He had spent the day at the polling-places where the bulk of the vote came in early and little was to be done. He noted that the number of men who wanted money for their votes was a small fraction, not a tenth as many in proportion as at Schenectady. The first few district returns showed that the Democratic candidate for President had carried the district and that the Tammany candidate for mayor had lost it by eighteen hundred.

"That's not bad," commented Commissioner Mahoney. "It means Hascott will carry the city by sixty thousand. Let us see how many votes Montgomery polls. That will settle it. There never was any doubt of Hascott's election."

The returns as they came in were chalked on a blackboard divided off into squares for the candidates and election districts. Montgomery's vote fluctuated greatly, in several election districts exceeding Thurton's. By the time the fourth district returns came in the commissioner took Van Buren's hand. "You win," he said. "That Montgomery idea saved us."

The full returns were:

Van Buren, 3714;

Thurton, 3129;


Montgomery, 1862.

Van Buren ran four hundred and eleven ahead of Hascott. "That's a very good showing," said

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the commissioner, approvingly. "Any man who has four hundred friends split their tickets for him in a Presidential year is a good one." Van Buren had not thought so. Over a thousand men had assured him that they were against Tammany but would vote for him, and it was disappointing to feel that had not Senator Marlow's suggestion been followed he would in all probability have been defeated. His vote added to Montgomery's was over eight hundred more than the Democratic candidate for President received, and Van Buren concluded that Thurton had really been defeated by the enemies he had made and that Senator Marlow's advice not to run too often was as sound as his suggestion to divide the enemy.

XVII

FTER his election to the assembly Van Buren's law practice took a sudden increase, not in the way of litigation but consultation. It surprised him how many people were willing to pay him a hundred dollars for a little easy advice, and insisted on paying promptly for it, too. One of the title companies, several insurance companies, a gas company, and different business associations sent him little jobs obviously as tokens of good-will and a desire to be friendly. None of them had anything to do with proposed legislation, and there was no intimation of any further service to be rendered. Van Buren consulted Commissioner Mahoney about it.

"Take them all," he advised. "It's easy money and it walks in of its own accord. It's very complimentary. They don't size you up for a legislative highbinder or they would turn you over to their Albany man. They just want to be friendly, that's all, and don't want you to go out of your way to bother them. They won't mind if you vote against all their bills—they'll get votes enough without yours, only don't be too ugly with them, and be content to mind your own business and not bother how they do theirs."

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"None of the friends I met with Mr. Coulter have done it," continued Van Buren.

"They're not fifty dollar and one hundred dollar people. If they want you to do anything they'll talk it over with me first. The small people are legitimate perquisites for the assemblyman himself. I never interfere with them."

Van Buren went home to spend Thanksgiving. He had written short letters regularly to his mother, and once to Amy in reply to somewhat formal congratulations from her on his nomination. He wrote telling her of his election. He had thought of writing to Miss Marlow on some pretext or other to show that he had not forgotten her, but he strongly surmised that she knew this without his telling her.

On reaching home his mother welcomed him as she had done in his boyhood days on his return from school. They spent the evening together talking over the happenings since his last visit. Mrs. Van Buren asked whether he would spend the winter in Albany or at home, and go over to the assembly from day to day.

"I think I'd better live in Albany," Van Buren replied. "I would not get the same experience going over only for the daily sessions. It is the difference between a day scholar and a boarder at school. I recollect even at college we called the fellows who lived at home day scholars, and I think I will go to the Delavan and take a room there."

One of the first things he did on his return to New York was to call on his friend Judge Murphy. It was some time since he had been in the judge's house, and they were all glad to see him. He took

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supper with the family, and after supper sat with the judge in his little office and smoked.

The judge was troubled. His primaries had been held satisfactorily, as usual, and a new district committee chosen, all of whom he relied upon as old friends; but he had heard disturbing rumors—that he was to be turned down by Mr. Coulter. His district had given its usual majority in the thousands at the fall election, and apparently he was secure in his leadership, but his political senses gave him premonition of his possible overthrow. The majority of his committee were office-holders or interested in city contracts and privileges. With Mr. Coulter and the police against him he would have nothing to rely upon except friendship and money. He might hold his committee with money once, but that was a way that could not last. He told Van Buren his fears.

“The boss has been chilly to me lately. He gives me the cold eye when I turn up at the club. It looks as though he doesn’t want my kind any more. I’m better with the boys here than in theatre clothes up on the avenue. He’s dropping the old-timers one by one, and I’m one of the last. The day of the old-time district leader is over. The boss wants a lot of foremen and chief clerks on the job, and he’s running it as a business enterprise.”

“Why don’t you have a frank talk with him and find out where you stand?”

“What’s the good? I told him I’d heard talk of trouble, and he says he don’t interfere, that it’s for the district to settle such matters. I can settle this district fast enough, but I can’t fight the machine

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and the police in a neighborhood like this. It looks to me like I'm up against it."

His term of office had several years to run, and he was in no fear of losing that for the present; but the idea that one of his lieutenants should be raised to leadership over him harrowed his soul and meant to him the greatest humiliation of his life.

The committee was composed of thirty-two members, of whom seventeen constituted a quorum. All the members were ostensibly devoted to Judge Murphy. But almost invariably as soon as politicians become hardened and their finer sensibilities blunted the spirit of supreme selfishness becomes dominant.

The management of the deposition of the judge had been put in the hands of Jimmie Breck, a prison lawyer, who was to be the judge's successor. He first allied to himself the proprietor of a Chatham Square saloon known as The Bludgeon and Tom Cleary, the police captain's nephew. By promises of office and other considerations they succeeded in inducing fourteen members, enough with themselves to constitute a majority, to promise to vote for the judge's dethronement.

At the next monthly meeting of the general district committee the members were prompt in attendance. Judge Murphy with his adherents ranged themselves on one side of the room; the conspirators occupied the opposite side. Among the latter was the alderman, bleary-eyed and bloated, and barely able to speak in monosyllables when spoken to. Some of the judge's friends advised him to resign rather than submit to the humiliation of

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being expelled, but he would not listen to them. Although he saw it was a forlorn hope he declared he would fight it out to the end.

When the time came to call the committee to order, Judge Murphy calmly took his customary place as the presiding officer and rapped attention.

"The first order of business, gentlemen," began the judge, following the preliminary routine, "is to hear the reading of the minutes of the last meeting."

"D—n the order of business!" shouted Breck.

"That's right!" came from a dozen throats.

"There's only one piece of business on hand tonight," continued Breck, raising his voice to a high pitch to drown the prevailing noise and confusion. "I move Judge Murphy be removed from the office of chairman."

"Second the motion," loudly exclaimed several simultaneously.

"All in favor of the motion," continued Breck, "say 'aye'; contrary-minded, 'no.'"

In a minute the judge was on his feet, calm and undisturbed. His dignified attitude and that familiar ruby face and irresistible smile won a hearing from his turbulent opponents.

"My friends," he commenced, "I know you have a majority sufficient to remove me. I do not ask any favors of you, only to carry out your orders from the boss in an orderly way. We have all been true friends for the last ten years, and this is the first break," and with tears glistening in his eyes he added, "and if the orders of the boss must separate us now, let us still continue outside of

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politics to keep up the old friendship and good times."

There were tears in the eyes of many of his old cronies in the enemy's ranks as the judge was speaking.


"Well, Mr. Breck," said the judge, gently, seeing a determination on the part of the majority to cut short his speech, "I know what your reward is for turning out your friend and leader. Every dollar you have in the world you owe to me. Now take your vote, but I want each member to vote as his name is called, as I wish to know who are my friends and who are my enemies."

The judge had before him a printed list of the members. Perfect stillness reigned in the hall as the vote was called. The call finished, the judge announced amid silence the result.

"There have been thirty-two votes cast," said the judge. "Of these, seventeen are in favor of the motion to remove me from the office of chairman and fifteen are opposed to the motion. The motion is carried." With lowered head he mockingly added, "I thank you, gentlemen."

Folding his papers Judge Murphy proudly strode towards the door.

XVIII

N the fight to overthrow Judge Murphy Assemblyman Keegan voted with the judge. Mr. Coulter had sent for him and asked him to make the fight and take the leadership, but he had declined the offer. Not that he was over-friendly to the judge, but his sympathy was not with the men who were trying to turn down the judge and their methods were not to his liking. The proper course would have been to make an open fight before the people at the primaries, and not to seek the judge's downfall by buying his committee away from him. Keegan had aspirations some day to be leader of the district himself, but his methods were of a different kind, and the treachery fostered against the judge he foresaw might be turned against himself some day.

Keegan had risen to be assemblyman by fighting his way. In a neighborhood where every tenement house supported a saloon and the saloon-keeper and the undertaker were the social leaders as well as the most lucrative occupations, Keegan never drank or smoked. As a boy he worked in one of the second-hand clothing stores that line Baxter Street, one of the few Irish boys so employed. His schooling ceased early, but not earlier than was the

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custom in those days, when Five Points was really a tough place day and night, when the front and rear tenements on Mulberry Street had not been razed to make a park, and when Paradise Park was the only spot of green except on St. Patrick's day. In those days the fourth and sixth wards were Irish, except for the few Hebrews in the clothing business on Baxter Street and the Chinamen who had settled in Doyers and Pell, those old colonial byways.

Working in a Baxter Street store was a vigorous occupation from morning till night. No sailor or other wayfaring man had any business in Baxter Street unless he desired to change his clothing, and whether he thought he wanted to buy or not was no concern of the barkers and pullers-in who lined the sidewalk. They insisted on the passer-by coming in and exchanging his present apparel and what money was in the pockets of it for the toggery of which they kept an abundance. If he resisted, it made no difference in the end. His clothes were changed by force and he was sent away with whatever had been put on his back, while the coat and trousers he had when he appeared were added to the stock-in-trade. While the nativity of the proprietors of these Baxter Street clothing stores was consonant with the bargaining of their business, the muscular department was managed by their Irish assistants.

In this occupation Keegan was brought up, beginning as a boy assistant and developing into a successful salesman. He rarely had to use force. There was a subtle, persuasive quality in his voice

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and a winsome look in his eyes that increased the business of the Particular Original Cohen for whom he worked and that enlarged the sales on which young Keegan received a percentage, which percentage he took home to his mother who saved it. His father was dead, and the other children, of whom there were many, had gone out for themselves, leaving young Michael alone with his mother in the three rooms of the tenement which was their home. When the savings amounted in all to six hundred dollars, which took several years, Mrs. Keegan drew the money from the savings-bank and young Michael blossomed out as the proprietor of a saloon on Park Street. The former proprietor consumed too much of his own goods, and the brewery which owned the mortgage transferred the equity to Keegan for five hundred dollars. The other hundred was working capital and subsistence money. The Keegan saloon—it was before they were called cafés in Five Points—prospered from the beginning. The Keegan family connection was large and by marriage it had become larger, numbering over two hundred voters, enough in itself to make a saloon prosperous. The Whoo-Whoo gang numbered some of the Keegans among its members, and through their influence the Whoo-Whoo headquarters were informally established in the back room, where the leading Whoo-Whoos could be found late in the afternoon and early in the evening before their working hours began. Michael Keegan himself kept clear of the Whoo-Whoos, who had a habit of collecting pocket-books, watches, and jewelry from men who strayed into the Five Points neighborhood late at night when they had no busi-

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ness there and should have been safer at home asleep with their families. The name of Whoo-Whoo came from the cry with which these watch-collectors used to warn one another of the possible interruption of their labors by the police or other interfering individuals. It may be said, however, that the interruptions by the police were not frequent, and usually were caused by some blundering novice or through some policeman's dissatisfaction with his share of the profits of this established nocturnal industry.

Young Michael Keegan's first ambition was to be an undertaker. Next to the alderman, who was, of course, second to that far-off political divinity the judge of the Tombs Police Court, was the undertaker, ranking with the assemblyman and ahead of the most prosperous saloon-keepers. To be an undertaker required capital, the ownership of a pair of black horses and a hearse, the fitting up of a coffin emporium with elaborate and costly caskets draped in black broadcloth and the handles and trimmings of real silver. Funerals were the greatest festive occasions of the neighborhood, nights of mourning followed by a day of glorious display, making up for years of hardship and the consolation for the years of debt-paying. The undertaker's bill was the one debt of honor. Saloon scores were paid or not as convenience required; grocers', butchers' and clothing bills were uncommon, for such creditors were regarded as proper spoil; the landlord was paid only under compulsion, but the undertaker's bill was cheerfully paid in full if it took years of privation to do it. Otherwise the

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undertakers would have restricted the funeral display to cash in hand, and the greatest ambition of the old Irish settlers would have been disappointed. This financial code made the business of undertaker most profitable, but it required large capital, and it was several years before the profits of Keegan's Park Street saloon permitted the opening of the Keegan Undertaking and Funeral Emporium on Mulberry Street.

From the start the Keegan undertaking business was a success. Without additional charge the Keegan funeral processions would drive up and down and around the district that all the sick people and the bartenders and the store-keepers could see the size of the procession and count the carriages, while the former custom had been for the undertaker to drive directly to the ferry unless an additional payment was made. Then the Keegan floral displays surpassed anything ever known before, and by adding a large ice-box to his establishment he was able to use the same flowers over and over again, both at additional profit to himself and at a saving to his customers. Then he arranged with the Chatham Square hackmen to drive in a procession through the district and return to their stands at a quarter of the price they charged to go the whole way to the cemetery. By these progressive ideas even the poor inhabitant of Five Points could afford a funeral with five open barouches full of flowers and at least fifty hacks, something that only the richest saloon-keepers had been able to have before.

Naturally such success brought envy as well as riches. Keegan's saloon business expanded until he

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had to install two cousins as bartenders to look after the Park Street saloon. He arranged his working hours by spending his days at the Mulberry Street emporium and his nights at his Park Street saloon. Late one night, when the front bar-room was darkened to comply with the one o'clock closing law and the back room was crowded with customers, a bullet came in through the window and hit Jerry Keegan, who was behind the bar. Jerry was known as Four-eyed Keegan from his wearing spectacles. In build and general appearance, especially in a dim light, he might be taken for Michael.

Jerry was dying on a bench in the back room when the police and the reporters came. The priest was with him, and his wife and his mother and his children were in the bar-room sobbing their farewells. It was almost morning, light enough to see in the bar-room without the gas-jets, which were still burning. Outside a crowd had gathered. The doctor had gone, and there was no one with Jerry except the priest and the women and children of his family. By the front door stood Michael, his face calm and set. Outside was the crowd, with other Keegans here and there.

As the police and the police reporters bustled up Michael waved them away, "It's an accident," he placidly said. "Jerry was cleaning up and he happened to knock the revolver off the shelf back of the bar. It fell on the floor and went off. Youse had all better go home."

One of the reporters, looking around, saw the bullet-hole in the plate-glass.

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"The bullet seems to have gone through here?" he inquired.

"That hole was there when I bought the place," said Keegan.

The police investigated and learned nothing, the reporters inquired and found nothing to print. The funeral was the next Sunday, and nothing like it had ever been seen before. There were two hundred and sixty-nine carriages and twelve barouches of flowers, and the procession drove over every street in the ward. Michael Keegan rode in the first carriage with the priest.

A few nights after the funeral one Thomas Feeney was found near the Park Street saloon lying under a truck with his skull smashed in. Again the police and the police reporters gathered. The Keegan saloon was closed, and leaning against the front door was Michael Keegan gazing over the crowd. One of the reporters who had called the night of Jerry's accident stepped up and asked Keegan what had happened.

"That Feeney was blink-eyed and he couldn't see well nights," Keegan again calmly explained. "He was walkin' along the street and he didn't see the truck, and he butted his head into the wheel and cracked his nut. People like him should know better than to be out alone after dark."

The police and the police reporters again investigated, and learned nothing except that if the accident happened as Keegan had related Feeney must have been walking backward. Feeney was buried by another undertaker, and the funeral did not approach in size and magnificence the obsequies

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of Four-eyed Keegan, which remains a record to this day.

A few weeks after the Feeney funeral Keegan was walking one afternoon on Mulberry Street. As he passed the big tenement known as The Barracks a brick dropped down from the air and struck him a glancing blow on the head. The doctor sewed a five-inch tear in his scalp, and he was laid up for a fortnight. The reporter who had reported the Four-eyed Keegan and the Feeney mishaps looked up Keegan and asked him how this last accident happened.

"It was a windy day," Keegan again calmly explained. "You recollect how the wind was blowing. Them barracks is old and coming apart, and the wind blew that brick off the chimbley."

This brick had something to do with Keegan's candidacy for the assembly. He had always been in politics. No one of his nationality in that neighborhood was ever out of politics. When he worked for the Original Cohen he learned that political activity was necessary in order to be kept harmless from the rows which were of daily occurrence. In the saloon business it was still more necessary to be friendly with the political powers so that his most profitable business hours would not be interfered with. One of the duties of Five Points saloon-keepers was to go bail for their steady customers when arrested and to use reasonable means to prevent any convictions. Such bail was rarely lost. It was a point of honor, like paying the undertaker. Sometimes it might be necessary for the defendant to jump his bail, but his family and his gang always

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reimbursed the bail-giving saloon-keeper whatever expense he might be forced to stand in the rare instances where the bail bond was proceeded on.

These necessities of daily life made politics part of Keegan's business. He was the captain of his election district before he was twenty-one. There was no age limit on political activity around Five Points, and who was to dispute the word of a registered voter about his own age? Keegan, however, always personally obeyed the law except the excise law, and no one thought of obeying that. It was not thought of as were the other laws, the penal code and the like, but simply as strengthening the power of the district leader and adding to the revenues of the police captain.

In a very few years Keegan made his election district the banner district. Everybody in it was Keegan's friend, or if he was not he soon found it wise to move. The Keegans were clannish, and a goodly fraction of the two hundred Keegan voters settled in the district of which Michael was captain. His cousin John Keegan, the policeman, patrolled Park Street; his cousin Jimmy Keegan, the fireman, was assigned to the nearest engine-house; his cousin Patrick Keegan, who wrote the best hand in the family, was the street-cleaning inspector for Five Points; his uncle Keegan, was made keeper of Paradise Park; the widow of Four-eyed Keegan was forelady of the prison court floor-scrubbers, and still other Keegans were street-car drivers and on the big pipes, all through Michael and the banner district.

Such prosperity could not go unruffled, and the brick incident brought home to Michael Keegan the

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necessity of a vindication over the people who had been saying unkind things about him, and they were many. There was Mangan, who kept a saloon on Centre Street, which had dropped off in receipts through the proximity of Keegan's more popular place; Timothy Reilly, who was the most prosperous undertaker until Keegan went into the business; Big Bolivar, whose district had hitherto had the banner; Assemblyman Meegan, who was the youthful protégé of Big Bolivar; and not least, the Feegan who kept the saloon next the big Barracks. The alderman and Judge Murphy kept themselves aloof from these differences, as behooved men with larger interests in a higher sphere. They always stood ready to side with and reward the winner after his victory.

When Keegan was around again and had recovered from the wind-blown brick, he concluded to assert himself, and announced his candidacy for the assembly nomination. Usually there were three or four candidates for the assembly besides the Republican, who did not count, and ran only as a matter of form to fill out the ticket. Meegan was a candidate for re-election, and as soon as Keegan's candidacy was known, Mangan, Reilly, and Feegan announced that they were candidates, and that before election they would combine on the strongest of their number to down Keegan. McCarthy, the junk man, was at that time the sage of Five Points, and a valued friend and counsellor to the Keegan family. To him Keegan went for advice and stated the situation.

"Michael, me boy," said sage McCarthy, "ene-

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mies is a sign of prominence. Them that has nothing else has no enemies. It's for you to do your duty."

From McCarthy's junk-shop Keegan went to the law-office near the city prison, where Assemblyman Cornelius Meegan had a desk and a copy of the penal code. Assemblyman Meegan was in.

"I hear you've been speakin' ill of me," stated Keegan.

"I've been sayin' nothin' what's not true," replied the assemblyman.

"Ye'll swallow yer words," retorted Keegan.

With that he put one arm around the assemblyman, binding his arms, and by prodding the assemblyman's throat with an uptilted thumb, forced his head back and his mouth open. With the other hand Keegan reached the inkstand from the desk and poured its contents into the assemblyman's gasping mouth. The spluttering and choking made a general splatter.

"This is a warning to you," continued Keegan, solemnly. "The next time you'll eat the inkstand."

From the assemblyman's law-office Keegan went to Reilly's undertakery. Reilly was about to mount the hearse and go to a funeral.

"Come down from there," commanded Keegan.

"You blank, blank, blank," retorted Reilly.

With that Keegan jumped up on the wheel of the hearse and grabbed Reilly by the collar and pulled him down to the sidewalk. Reilly had on his funeral silk hat, black frock-coat, and white tie.

"Respect for the dead restrains me," remarked

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Keegan. "I'll content meself with hurling your slanders in your face."

With that he slapped him upon the mouth.

"Now go about your business and keep your mouth shut about your betters."

A large audience looked on approvingly at this public vindication. They knew all the facts and regarded this as an auspicious opening of Keegan's political campaign.

Followed at a respectful distance by admiring friends, Keegan proceeded to Mangan's saloon. The proprietor was out, but his brother Jimmy was behind the bar. Jimmy reached for the bar revolver.

"You would, would you!" exclaimed Keegan, reproachfully, at this breach of Five Points etiquette, and he reached over the bar and catching Jimmy Mangan by the collar lifted him over. "Where's your brother?" inquired Keegan, as with one hand he turned Jimmy upside down and stood his head in the cuspidor, a feat of strength admired to this day. Reports from the crowd in the street indicated the speedy arrival of the brother, and Keegan went out to meet him. Mangan had been a local prize-fighter, and the saloon represented his share of many purses. He had heard of Keegan's active canvass and hastened to meet him. On his near approach Keegan suddenly lowered his head and butted Mangan in the abdomen. Mangan lay down in the gutter. A visit to Feegan's saloon, next the big Barracks, and Feegan's demolition followed promptly.

Keegan returned to the junk-shop exhausted with

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his hard labors and told Sage McCarthy his progress towards vindication.

"Michael, me boy," commended the sage, "you seen your duty and you done it. You done noble."

There remained only Big Bolivar to be contended with, and he was the greatest of all. Through emissaries it was arranged that Bolivar and Keegan should meet that evening in a vacant lot in Chinatown and decide the supremacy of the district. The battle was fought by rounds in the presence of all the leading politicians, the judge and the alderman alone being absent, such a proceeding being beneath their dignity.

Bolivar lay on the ground unconscious before the eleventh round was over. He was picked up and revived.

"You're a good one," he said to Keegan, when Keegan shook him by the hand to show that enmity was over. "Your nomination will be unanimous."

And since that day, as Keegan often proudly says, "There's not been man, woman, nor child to speak ill of me in the district."

Judge Murphy was overthrown between election day and the opening of the legislature, when Keegan took his seat. Keegan had tried to keep aloof from the conflict, but at the meeting of the committee he voted with the minority and against the judge's deposition. His business had increased and the savings went into additional saloons, until he now had three, besides the undertaking emporium. His mother had shared in his prosperity, and the family now occupied the whole floor over the saloon, where a niece helped with the housekeeping.

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Matters in the legislature went pleasantly with Keegan, due greatly to his good-nature and the care with which he kept his word, for he prided himself on these things: that he never tasted intoxicating liquor and that he never broke a promise or deserted a friend.

All went well until one day a bill with Mr. Coulter's endorsement was introduced giving the chief of police power to close any saloon, and giving him the right to lock up in the station-house for three days without a hearing or a trial any man whose picture was in the rogues' gallery. The bill was preceded by an interview printed in all the New York papers, where the chief of police said that such a law would enable him to drive all criminals from New York, and that the only crimes would be committed by new men, who, as soon as detected, would have their pictures put in the rogues' gallery, and then be arrested again and again under the three-day provision. The chief explained that such a law was necessary, for it was often difficult if not impossible to secure sufficient evidence to convict many criminals where there was no question that the crime had been committed and there was a moral certainty who the criminal was.

T. Percy Horsford introduced the bill, and in the name of "the better element of New York" asked for its immediate passage. This required unanimous consent. There was general surprise when Keegan, who regularly voted for everything and objected to nothing, said, "I object."

That night, at the stroke of one o'clock, headquarters detectives descended upon Keegan's three

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saloons, all of which were openly doing business, the same as every other saloon in the neighborhood, and arrested the bartenders. Previously the chief had given out an interview which appeared in every morning newspaper.

The chief said: "The bill introduced by Mr. Horsford was drawn by me and approved by the city authorities. Its object is to drive away habitual criminals and to close the saloons which they haunt. It is, I believe, desired by nine-tenths of the people. I am not surprised at Assemblyman Keegan's opposition, but I did not think, in view of his record and the facts, that his opposition would be open. Assemblyman Keegan is the backer of the Whoo-Whoo gang. Their headquarters are his saloon on Park Street. Mike the Bite, Choker Bill, Paddy Gurck, the well-known pickpocket, Shanglely the burglar, Reddy McGuire, Obe Driscoll, and others of that kidney meet nightly in the back room of Assemblyman Keegan's saloon to plan their depredations on society. They have all served terms in prison, and if they had their deserts they would be in Sing Sing now. When three well-known constituents of Assemblyman Keegan escaped from Sing Sing last summer through the connivance of a guard, the money to bribe the guard was, it was generally believed, handled by Assemblyman Keegan. While he never participates in their crimes in person, he is always ready to go their bail, provide counsel for them, and work the underground wires to defeat justice and secure their release. I regard such a man as more dangerous than the criminals themselves. It is not part of my official duty

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to warn the legislature against one of its members, but by his open defence of the criminal classes, as shown by his attitude on this meritorious bill, Assemblyman Keegan has invited an exposure of his record and he must take the consequences."

When Van Buren arrived in the assembly corridor, a few minutes before the assembly convened, he saw Keegan standing alone at one side of the entrance. No one spoke to him. The crushing charges of Chief O'Brien had been seen and read by all, and they shunned Keegan as if he were a criminal outcast.

Van Buren had been thinking about the bill overnight and examining it as he did all the bills. The more he read its provisions the stronger became an early impression that it put enormous and irresponsible power into the hands of one man, and that it was opposed to the whole theory of the English common law that a man is innocent until he is legally proved guilty. Whatever had been Keegan's motives, Van Buren did not think it right, and if it became necessary he had made up his mind that he would take an open stand against the bill.

Seeing Keegan so deserted and forlorn, Van Buren went over to him, and in a friendly way said, "Come on in, the session is about to begin."

"I ain't goin' in there any more," said Keegan, sullenly relapsing in the stress of emotion into the Five Points dialect that he always concealed when he could. I'm through. D'ye see the roast der chief had on me in de papes?"

"Yes, I saw it, but what of that? You did right in objecting to that bill."

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"It ain't de bill. It's me mudder. It's in all de papes. If me mudder saw them she'd die. She always t'ought I was straight and decent. It's on account o' her I don't drink nor smoke. I'm goin' away from here to Chicago, where a man like me has some show. De chief closed me places last night, and what can a liquor store do shut up at one o'clock? They's all three mortgaged, and nobody would give the mortgage for them with the chief poundin' me."

"Go on inside and tell the assembly what you have told me. This is a bad bill, and they'll all think so if they read it carefully."

Keegan walked in alone and over to his seat. The members on either side drew away and left him alone. Everybody regarded him intently. They had read often of the Whoo-Whoo gang and the criminals named by Chief O'Brien as familiar names. It had been all intangible to most of them, but here, in concrete shape, as one of their own number, was the brains of the Whoo-Whoos. They looked at him in a new light with a mixture of curious interest and pharisaical aversion.

After the opening prayer, and while the journal was being read, Keegan rose. Naturally tall and thin, he awkwardly stretched his full length and gulped, the perspiration standing in beads on his forehead. There was sudden silence. No one cared to lose a word.

"Mr. Speaka, I was born around de corner from de Tombs," he began, his Adam's-apple jerking convulsively as he forced out the words by main strength, "and all me life I've lived where ye could

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stand on de top o' de houses and see de men hang on de gallers in de Tombs yard. I was born there, and I'll die there. There's where all the frien's is dat I ever had. But what I've got to say is this:

"Yer all saw in de papes what de chief said about me this morning. Dat Mike de Bite is a frien' of mine. When I was at de Mulberry Street school, de only schoolin' I ever had, Mike Leonard sat on de seat wid me. It's him dey call Mike de Bite now. Then there's him dey call Choker Bill. I knowed him when his mother, Mrs. Callahan, called him Willie, and we was boys and played marbles togedder. Patsy Gurck lived in the same tenement, and when me fader was sick to his death Patsy's mother came in and helped nurse me fader. But they's no use of goin' through the list. All dem the chief says I've knowed man and boy for years and years; yes, and more. Dey is my frien's, and I'm theirs. I'm not one of dem. Me mudder kept me decent and sober, and but for her I might be up the river now doin' time instead o' here. But what of that? When one of them went wrong and I could I stood for it. When he was in trouble and I could help him I did. If he was in the pen and I could get him out I did. Ain't they human? Does youse tink dat people round Five Points is wild animals, and deserts one another, and haint got no souls nor frien's nor feelings?"

Keegan straightened up while the breathless silence continued, and gulped again. He stiffened his fists with the tension and burst forth:

"What de chief says is true. I done it. We was

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boys togedder, and they was the only frien's I ever had."

Copies of the bill had reached the editors of the big New York newspapers, and the storm of editorial criticism that burst the next day, when Keegan's speech was also printed, was so unusual that the bill was dropped, and Chief O'Brien, who never cared to be on the side against the newspapers, abandoned his discriminating vigilance over the Keegan saloons.

XIX



THE day before Christmas Van Buren went home again; and the day after Christmas he went to Albany to look over the rooms in the Delavan House which he had engaged by letter for the session. In his previous visits to Albany he had paid little attention to the Delavan, as it was not in the part of the city he frequented, but he had decided to go there for the winter, because almost all of the New York assemblymen and many of the members from the country made it their legislative headquarters. It was also the living-place of the heads of the lobby.

There was a legislative atmosphere about the old hotel, even before the session began. Red curtains partitioned off the reading-room and sitting-rooms on the marble first floor. The bar-room was surrounded by convenient nooks, where political conferences could be readily irrigated. Significant of the way the members of the legislature and the visitors spent their evenings was the neighborhood. On one side were the railroad stations and track occupying the land between the hotel and the Hudson River. Across Broadway, opposite the hotel entrance, were a faro-bank and a pool-room occupying the upper floors of an office building. A few doors

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up Broadway was another gambling-house. On the main street leading from the hotel to the Capitol were three more gambling-houses and two pool-rooms. So openly were these gambling-houses run that they not only had illuminated signs extending over the sidewalk, but they advertised in the daily Albany and Troy papers. Public opinion in Albany was in favor of keeping these places upon the theory that they brought money to Albany and kept it there, the proprietors, by a tacit understanding with the police, being unmolested so long as they did not allow residents of Albany to gamble. These games were crowded at such times as the beginning of the session and when important bills were being voted on.

Elections for United States senator gave gambling-houses the greatest returns. One New York assemblyman called Barn Door Sol, from the fact that he would take in anything, sold his vote to the friends of one candidate for senator for five thousand dollars, which he lost the same night at faro at the Red House, and returning to the Delavan roused the manager of another candidate from bed and resold his vote for four thousand dollars, with which he returned and continued the game. Such proceedings were not regarded as honorable by his associates, whose definition of an honest man coincided with that of a certain speaker of the assembly—"An honest man is a man who will stay bought." The proprietors of the gambling-houses kept track of legislation, and permitted their legislative friends to play with markers on the strength of the returns from their votes on pending matters.

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Van Buren's rooms were in the northwest corner of the hotel. He had a sitting - room, bedroom and bath, which cost him almost half of his salary. There had been forwarded to him from his New York office passes on all the railroads, parlor-cars, steamboats, and telegraph lines in the State. This he found was a matter of course, and that the members of the legislature did not in any way feel that their acceptance of these passes relieved the pass-giving corporations from paying for any desired favors. Occasionally some new assemblyman would return the passes with a public announcement, but such propriety was rather laughed at by the older members, who took their passes as they would a drink or a cigar from a lobbyist, implying no obligation excepting the amenability to further negotiations.

It was the custom to hold sessions of the legislature on Monday evening after the arrival of the afternoon express from New York, and on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and on Friday morning a short session, adjourning before the noon express to New York. This enabled the legislators to spend Friday evening and Saturday, Sunday, and Monday at their homes. The passes made a saving of about one hundred and fifty dollars a session, or ten per cent. of their salaries, and did not interfere with the collecting of the statutory mileage.

From the hotel Van Buren took a car down State Street to Senator Marlow's offices, and found him in the little inside room.

"Come right in," he exclaimed. "You're a man I've been wanting to see; and here's another friend

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of mine, Assemblyman Peters. He'll look after our interests in the lower house and you can be a great help to him. I congratulate you, and the people, too, on your election. If Tammany would only send men like you to the legislature, it would give the party a much better standing and appearance before the people."

"I came to thank you, senator, for the advice you gave me in the fall. It is to that I feel I owe my election, and I am grateful to you."

"I saw by the returns that the enemy were divided, but I did not know whether it was chance or manœuvring. Politics is the battle-field of peace, and tactics and strategy have as much to do with defeat as victory. Up the State we haven't enough privates in the ranks. There are too many officers, and they play politics too much, instead of spending their time filling the ranks with new recruits. In New York the ranks are full, but better results might be accomplished with more skilful methods."

The senator, Assemblymen Peters, and Van Buren had a long talk over the policy of the session, the senator advising the course to be pursued. It had been decided that the minority should nominate Peters for speaker and seek to make as much party capital as they could. Senator Marlow's term expired in a year, and the next legislature would elect his successor. It was essential to him that it should be Democratic.

"Give our opponents every opportunity to make errors," advised the senator. "The people rarely vote in favor of anything. They cast their votes

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to defeat some measure, to turn somebody out of office, to show their resentment at some party act."

Miss Marlow's appearance at five o'clock broke up the session. It was unintentional on Van Buren's part to stay until she came, but he was glad of it the moment he saw her. She let herself in through the private door to the hall.

"Time to quit politics, senator," she mockingly bowed. "How are you, Mr. Peters and Mr. Van Buren? 'Mr. Speaker,' I hope I can say, next year. We'll have the assembly then. No, I don't mean you, Mr. Van Buren. Mr. Peters is the organization candidate, and I am with the organization."

Miss Marlow was muffled in furs, all reddish-brown, a family of red foxes. Her fur driving-hat was a little fox, her jacket was made of several fox-skins, her muff had been a tiny fox, and round her neck was a boa of fox tails and claws. There were three shades of red, the red-brown of the furs, the red-pink of her cheeks, and the purple-red of her hair. Her hair sparkled with little diamonds made by nature from the blowing snow. Van Buren bowed and said nothing. The picture was so beautiful he wanted it to continue a picture.

Miss Marlow turned to him. "I congratulate you on your election. If we could have won a few more Republican districts the assembly would be ours, and Mr. Peters would be speaker this year."

"What a candidate you would make, Miss Marlow!" Van Buren had to say something. "Everybody would vote for you."

"Of course they would. That's the reason wom-

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en aren't allowed to run for office. They would always be elected, and the poor men couldn't have any offices except street-cleaners and policemen and firemen."

"What I want to be speaker for most of all," Assemblyman Peters said, "is to announce the majority vote of the assembly for the senator's reelection. I'd do anything for that."

"Those are the sentiments that appeal to me," said Miss Marlow, earnestly. "Take notice, Mr. Van Buren, in our family my father is the only candidate. Come along, father. I'll take you two men as far as the club."

Van Buren and Peters sat in the sleigh facing Miss Marlow and the senator. When they were passing the Capitol Peters said he had a little matter to attend to there and got out. As the remaining three were driving up Washington Avenue Van Buren remonstrated. "Don't condemn me to the club, Miss Marlow. Take me with you. I'll promise not to talk politics."

"It's too dark to drive, but I'll give you a cup of tea at home. I don't think you really like politics—not the way father does. You won't succeed if you don't. Concentration brings success. Now I concentrate on father's politics, and that makes it so much easier for him. I'm a great help to you, am I not, father?"

"Yes, yes," assented Senator Marlow, "but you might be a little more lenient. There is hardly a day but something goes undone because you are so prompt in coming for me."

"That's the thanks I get, Mr. Van Buren, for

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seeing that my father takes exercise and food. He wouldn't know the time of day if it weren't for me. It's politics, politics, and if it weren't for him I'd hate politics. I'd rather raise chickens. When I think of all the men father has done things for, I wonder if there is such a thing as gratitude."

"There isn't in the past tense," replied Van Buren. "Gratitude is expectation. Charity and gratitude are two abused terms. Most charity is a form of self-congratulation. At the expense of making many paupers, it feeds the vanity and adds to the satisfaction of the givers. The only real charity is that of the poor among themselves. They give of their little to the needy and deserving. There can be no real charity except between equals. I've no doubt the most bitter personal enemies the senator has are men whom he has done much for and who hate him because he will not do more."

"That's right, Van Buren," said the senator. "You lay the foundation for enmity nine times out of ten when you do a man an undeserved favor. Paying political or personal debts is one thing. That makes a friend. The recipient feels that he got what he earned and was entitled to, and goes to work to earn more, but the man who benefits by an unearned favor knows it. He wants more on the same terms. The line has to be drawn somewhere, and when too much voracity meets with a refusal he never forgives. The greatest mistake in politics is to give little things to men who aren't entitled to them because they ask for them. An honest 'no' hurts nobody. It is easier to say 'yes' in the beginning, but it is a bad beginning."

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"You would establish a sort of debit and credit system in the political world?"

"Why not? Politics is becoming more and more of a business. It requires business methods."

"I thought politics was more sentimental."

"There is sentiment in everything—sentiment and policy, both. Mercantile honor is a sentiment. Sobriety and integrity are sentiments. None the less they are good policy."

"Don't you believe in sentiment, Miss Marlow?" Van Buren wanted her to speak that he might hear the sound of her voice.

"Of course I do. Sentiment is all there is in a woman's life—all she has to live for. Only I don't like the word sentiment. It does not have the ring of what I mean. It is not strong or deep enough."

"Try the range of synonyms—feeling, love, sympathy, affection."

"None of them fits. I know what I mean well enough, and the real meaning is deeper than words. You recall the old hymn, 'Blest be the tie that binds.' It is the 'tie that binds' that I mean, all the ties that bind."

The sleigh had gone the length of Washington Avenue and back. The street lights had been lit; the flying particles of snow rediamonded Miss Marlow's hair and covered her furs with their sparkles; the crunching of the snow was a musical accompaniment in Van Buren's ears to the sound of Miss Marlow's voice. He preferred to sit and watch her and listen to her. Talking to her was an effort, a disturbance of his passive enjoyment of her beauty,

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and he wished that her father would continue the conversation without him.

Miss Marlow poured tea for her father and Van Buren in the library. Mrs. Marlow had not yet returned from a church board meeting. "Father and I have our cup of tea by ourselves here," Miss Marlow explained. "You are highly honored to be permitted to join us. If mother were here I'd send you out to have tea with the potentates."

"I must go after that and one cup," said Van Buren. "Thank you for not sending me at once to the club. You don't know, senator, what it is to me, an afternoon like this. It will make me wondrous wise."

"Like the bramble-bush man," laughed Miss Marlow.

XX

AN BUREN ran down to New York for a few days to consult with Commissioner Mahoney and Mr. Coulter. He understood that general orders were issued to Tammany members of the legislature at the beginning of the session, and special instructions from time to time, as the occasion arose, and he thought it would be advisable to find out about it. He took dinner with the commissioner at the Democratic Club, and asked what was expected of him.

"There won't be many matters this year for you to bother about," the commissioner explained. "Of course, you'll vote with the party on all political legislation, and on the other matters use your best judgment to make a good record. Don't be offensively righteous, but keep in view the nature of the district and that what we want is to carry the next legislature. If we do that there'll be some big things on, and I shouldn't be surprised if we'd have trouble with you. That may be your finish. But I'm not worrying that far ahead. To carry the legislature we will have to re-elect you, and carry at least seven other naturally Republican districts. That will give us the organization of the assembly, and in the senate we stand a fair show to

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break even. Mr. Coulter and I want you to do everything that will strengthen you for re-election. Any tough jobs will be turned over to men who don't mind and have sure districts."

"That puts me in a pleasant position," said Van Buren; "but why do you say that next year will be my finish?"

"Maybe it won't. I hope you'll become practical enough to stay at it. That's the trouble I have with the Murray Hill district. The only kind of Democrat it will elect is some new man, like you, with a good American name and club and social connections. It has done so several times before, but they never lasted. They were too good. Now, I never made a dirty dollar in my life, but I don't go out of my way to throw mud at other people. Attend to your own business and politicians will respect you. They understand you are different, only they can't see why your kind of man doesn't understand that they are different, too. We elected one of the South Carolina Pinckneys to the assembly four years ago, and he was so shocked at the goings-on that he spent more time denouncing his own friends than the Republicans. Any time you get to the boiling-point, select an unpopular bit of Republican rascality and boil over on that. I don't say that Tammany is any better, but the other people are bad enough to keep any one's time fully occupied exposing and denouncing them."

"You seem to think I'll go the way of the others."

"I hope not."

"I am sure I don't expect to accomplish any great reforms. What I wanted to go to the assem-

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bly for is the experience. I want to see how laws are actually made and be part of it."

"That's a more sensible reason than a desire to reform the world. New York City was not built in a day, and it takes more than one man to reform it."

"How many men would it take?"

"Every man, woman, and child. A city is what its people make it. The kind of government they have is, in the long-run, about what they want. How many of the professional reformers would allow somebody else to reform their faults and failings? Human nature is pretty much the same whether it lives at Five Points or on Fifth Avenue."

After dinner they went down-stairs to the main hall, where Mr. Coulter was holding his usual evening levee under the aureole of electric lights in front of his portrait. The club was thronged. The new mayor was not to take office until January 1st, and, although the major appointments had been announced, there were hundreds of smaller places, for which there were thousands of applicants. The office-seekers, clad in all kinds of dress suits, some of them obviously hired, clustered around with their friends and backers, waiting an opportunity to urge their claims upon Mr. Coulter.

Mr. Coulter himself was immaculately attired, and showed the result of a skilled and expensive tailor's labors to tone down the rough outlines of his square-set, muscular figure, and of a barber and a valet who had done their best. His clothes did not seem part of him, and while in one sense they were an excellent fit, they did not look to be fitting.

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The spatulate fingers and gnarled hands, one jammed in a trousers-pocket not made for it and the other half clinched in the natural position of the hand of a manual laborer when at rest; the shoulders heavy and bent with years of hard physical toil; the thick, wrinkled, and tanned neck; the bulldog head and massive jaw, and the cock of the cigar between the teeth long accustomed to a pipe—the appearance and impressions of these could not be wiped out by the best the tailor, the barber, and the valet could do. Withal, he was a strong man, exuding a sense of power and a habit of command. Van Buren resented the feeling of deference that unwillingly came to him in Mr. Coulter's presence.

As soon as Mr. Coulter saw Van Buren he stepped forward to greet him. This noticeable mark of attention caused a hum of comment. Van Buren was known by sight to few of those present, but within a minute his name, office, appearance, and antecedents had been impressed on the memory of every individual in the crowd. They regarded him as one of the latest of Mr. Coulter's favorites.

"I want to congratulate you on the fight you made." Mr. Coulter shook Van Buren's hand with a cordial grip. "We could carry every district in New York if our district leaders would only put up the right men. Give the people what they want. Tammany is looking for men like you, Mr. Van Buren. We want to push you forward, and anything we can do for you or your friends let me know. I'd like to have the leaders in the districts west of the park that re-elected their Republican

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assemblymen this year follow and profit by the example Commissioner Mahoney has set."

Mr. Coulter raised his voice a little so that the men standing by could hear these last words, knowing that before the evening was over his words would be repeated a score of times to every Tammany leader in a Republican district.

"I thank you, Mr. Coulter, and I appreciate your congratulations," said Van Buren. "I should also appreciate any advice you feel like giving me."

"Make a record that you can be re-elected on. That's most important. The organization won't have any matters of particular importance this winter. I don't look after the details of legislation myself. Mr. Stevens, whom you may know, drops in at Albany occasionally for us during the winter. Talk with him when you are in doubt. I am always glad to see you. Let me know anything I can do for you."

Van Buren thanked Mr. Coulter again, and drew off to one side to make room for the next applicant. The stream of petitioners continued as long as Mr. Coulter stood ready to receive them. He called every one by name. In rare cases the conversation could be heard by the by-standers. From the expressions on the applicants' faces there were many disappointments.

For an hour the commissioner and Van Buren sat in the café watching the crowd. Few of the men were at ease. There was an atmosphere of anxiety, of ungratified desires and disappointed hopes.

"I should call this scene rather sad," commented Van Buren.

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"It is, though I never looked at it that way," replied the commissioner. "Of course, many must be disappointed. There aren't enough offices for a tenth of the applicants. Then the civil service interferes."

"I suppose you are opposed to the civil service law?"

"Personally I can't say that I am. The law is bad, but it is a good excuse for politicians. When a man wants a little clerkship or to be a policeman or a fireman, and is turned down by the civil service, he can't blame his district leader, while if there were no civil service we should have to do the turning down ourselves and make so many enemies."

"Then why do you say it is a bad law? Doesn't it procure a better class of men than if the district leaders had the unrestricted power to appoint?"

"It does nothing of the sort. The examinations don't show fitness. Any high-school graduate can pass them, but it takes other qualities, like experience or common-sense, to make a good policeman or fireman or a clerk. Our police force is deteriorating for that reason. Truckmen, longshoremen, porters, street-car drivers, and the like make the best policemen. They know little old New York from the Battery to Spuyten Duyvil. They are used to out-door exposure, and they have the strength and nerve. But they can't pass the examinations. They left school too early. Any soft-handed, flabby-muscled, high-school graduate can answer more questions than they can. With firemen it's even more so. A fireman requires a cool head, hard sense, and nerve. How are his answers to a set of

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printed questions going to determine that? The very qualities that make a man valuable in politics help to make him a good policeman or fireman, if he has the physique and the nerve, and those are the men a district leader would naturally put on the force. The medical and physical examination is all right, but the high-school questions are no good."

"How about the clerks?"

"Substitute a simple examination in handwriting, spelling, and, where a book-keeper or something special is required, an examination in that, and it wouldn't be so bad. I recall the mayor telling me about a clerk the civil service board sent him. You know all the city warrants go through the mayor's office to be countersigned by him. He found that the warrant-clerk was taking ten-dollar tips to hurry some warrants through out of their order. They would have been signed anyway in their regular course, and the warrant-clerk had nothing to do but enter them in a book, and check them off when signed to see none was lost or mislaid. The investigation and auditing were done by the comptroller's office, and the mayor's signature was almost perfunctory. The mayor didn't like the tip-taking and transferred the clerk, who was one of our people; then he sent to the civil service board for a good, reliable clerk who had no political connections.

"They sent a young man who had just passed a most creditable examination. He brought his examination papers with him and showed them to the mayor. The mayor read them and gasped. He was a hard-headed business man, and he thought he was fairly well educated, but he couldn't have

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answered a quarter of the questions. The mayor kept the papers and showed them to me. Here are a few of them:

"Name the principal rivers of France and the waters into which they flow.

"How many states compose the German Empire and what are their respective populations?

"Where was the first railroad built in the United States and when?

"Is a perpetual motion machine possible? State the reasons for your answer.

"Is the trajectory of a cannon-ball a perfect arc? Also state whether the highest point a projectile in motion attains is nearer its start or its fall.

"Describe the different planetary systems visible to the naked eye.

"These are only a few samples I copied to show to office-seekers. That young man's percentage on questions like these was over ninety."

"There are only two questions on the list you have given that I could answer off-hand," said Van Buren. "Still, I think I know how to get the required information."

"You couldn't pass the examination, then. They wouldn't suspend it until you went to some library and looked the answers up."

"How did the clerk make out?"

"That's the best of it. The clerk felt charged with the responsibilities of the administration. A few days after he began he came in to the mayor and said, 'Mr. Mayor, on Friday I placed a warrant for forty-seven thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars on your desk. It is now Monday and that warrant has not been returned to me.'

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“‘Yes, I know,’ replied the mayor. ‘I have it in my desk.’

“‘Tuesday morning the clerk again appeared.

“‘That warrant for forty-seven thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars, to the order of John McKenna, is still in your possession, Mr. Mayor.’

“‘I know it is,’ again replied the mayor.

“‘Tuesday afternoon the clerk again appeared.

“‘Mr. McKenna was in after that warrant,’ he reprovingly said to the mayor. ‘I explained it to him as well as I could.’

“‘What business have you explaining anything? You go back to your wire cage and stay there. Officer’—to the mayor’s policeman—‘lock this young man up in his wire cage, and don’t let him out or let any one speak to him during business hours.’

“‘Wednesday morning the clerk hovered around until the mayor appeared, when he again began, ‘Mr. Mayor, I could not sleep last night for the responsibility of that warrant. As a sworn official charged with the custody of the city’s warrants, I fear I shall be held responsible for that forty-seven thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars. It would relieve me greatly if you would promptly return that warrant with your action stated in writing thereon. If you decline to sign the warrant, as I understand you have that right, I am entitled, for my own protection, to request that your refusal and the reasons therefor be put in writing and filed with me.’

“‘The mayor exploded at the time, and used profane language, but he has often laughed over it since. That young man made himself such a general pestiferous nuisance that he had to be got rid of.’”

XXI



THE legislative year began with the governor's New-Year's receptions after the Artillery Ball on New-Year's eve. Van Buren had returned from New York on the legislative express, which left the Grand Central Station at three-thirty in the afternoon, and carried few passengers who had not a pass. By chance an Albany merchant, Van Buren's old friend Colonel G. Humphrey Ring, who should have known better, took seat No. 17 in the senatorial parlor-car, and settled himself to enjoy the river view when the train should reach the Hudson. State Senator Brown had been watching the man who goes around to hammer the car wheels and see that they are sound, and heard him remark to the assistant depot-master that one of the wheels on this particular car was cracked and that another car would have to be substituted. Going on into the car, Senator Brown walked up and down the aisle examining the numbers on the seats. Stopping at seat No. 17, he turned to Colonel Ring and said:

"Pardon me, sir, but I am Senator Brown, and that is my accustomed seat. I should be glad to furnish you with another seat. Porter, show the gentleman another seat."

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Colonel Ring fumed.

"Why should I give you my seat? What presumption! I might say, what impudence!"

Senator Brown calmly turned to the porter.

"Johnson, tell the gentleman who I am."

"That's Senatah Brown, sah. The senatah always comes up on this train."

"Find him another seat then. Here is a Wagner ticket for my chair, and I'll give it up to nobody."

"I regret exceedingly, sir," placidly continued Senator Brown, "the manner in which you choose to take my polite request. I made it not on my personal behalf, but in the interest of the people of the Empire State. I am accustomed to occupy seat No. 17, and, basking in the afternoon sunshine, to view the Palisades, the Catskills, and the noble Hudson. A few hours so spent fill me with a serene tranquillity, and enable me to approach my legislative duties in a proper spirit, which redounds solely to the benefit of the people of the State, whose servant and representative I am. I regret the necessity to take other measures. Conductor, this gentleman has a ticket for seat No. 17, car Pocahontas, and insists on it. Kindly have this car taken off and some other car substituted on which this gentleman's ticket to seat No. 17 will not be good. Provide him, however, with equally good accommodations."

Turning to the other passengers, almost all of whom knew him personally, Senator Brown went on: "It is with regret, gentlemen, that I see you put to this inconvenience, but the good of the people is the supreme law. You can say it in Latin,

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if you prefer. I am going up-stairs to see my friend Chauncey and have the change made."

Senator Brown went out on the platform to watch the fun. Colonel Ring was storming, and passengers who knew Senator Brown were wondering what would happen next, when the assistant depot-master came in, and shouted: "All out. This car is not going."

"Why isn't it going?" screeched Colonel Ring. "Do you allow this gang of impudent politicians to run this road? I am a stockholder, and my firm and my father before me. I'll bring this to the attention of the directors and the president and the stockholders. This is an outrage!"

The innocent assistant depot-master, who knew Colonel Ring, was astonished. "Why, colonel, you don't want to ride in a car with a cracked wheel, it's dangerous. Our car-tester just found a crack. Another parlor-car will be put on at once, and this one will be sent to Mott Haven for a new wheel."

"That's your way of letting yourself out of it. You don't appease me. I don't blame you. I suppose you do what you're told. But I'll see whether this road is run by this gang of pass-riding politicians or by the stockholders and the public."

The crowd filed out of the car and onto the platform, all but two assemblymen who knew what a practical joker Senator Brown was and kept their seats, thinking it was all a bluff. They were carried up to the Mott Haven yards by a switching-engine. Another parlor-car was put on. Senator Brown solemnly stalked in while all the other pas-

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sengers stood until he took seat No. 17. The train started.

"Porter, bring a case of champagne," said the senator. "My dear colonel, I trust you will join us. I have often heard of you, and admired you by reputation. Let us all drink to 'The People—they pay the taxes.'"

It was a glimpse of a new side of life to Van Buren. He had sat quietly puzzled over the scene, had filed out with the rest of the passengers, and returned when told. Senator Brown made the porter pass trays with the filled glasses to everybody in the car. Van Buren recalled his Tammany train experience and started to decline.

"The senatah will feel hurt," whispered the porter.

Van Buren drank to the toast of "The People." Senator Brown left his seat and went across to Van Buren.

"I've heard a lot of pleasant things about you from Commissioner Mahoney," he said, "and I've promised to keep an eye on you, that is, if you don't mind. Some of the men who have tried to represent your district thought they were too good for the rest of us."

Knowing from the newspapers that Senator Brown, otherwise known as the Wicked Brown, was the Republican leader of the senate, Van Buren was surprised at the obviously friendly relations between him and Commissioner Mahoney.

"I've read a great deal about you, senator, in the newspapers. I'd be glad to have you give me points."

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"Yes, I suppose you've read that I have horns. You'll change your opinion about newspaper judgments after they've written you up a few times."

Van Buren was glad to have an opportunity to study the noted senator. He saw that everybody liked him, and many of them had a positive affection for him. He was a handsome man, tall, distinguished in appearance, simply and neatly dressed, his hair turning gray, and his gray mustache worn drooping to hide partially a deep scar made by a Confederate bullet at Cold Harbor. He was evidently an American to the third and fourth generation, a different type from the Irish, the Germans, and the Hebrews Van Buren had been meeting at the Democratic Club.

Poker games started at once in the state-rooms at each end of the car, and pinochle, euchre, and hearts were played by those who had not room to get in the state-rooms. It was a social card club on wheels. Senator Brown had taken pains to flatter and appease Colonel Ring. It was his policy always to try to smooth out the results of one of his practical jokes.

It was long after dark when the train reached Albany. Van Buren had drifted into one of the games of hearts, and at five cents a heart he had won six dollars and twenty-five cents, not enough to call it real gambling, but with a pleasant feeling that he had not been beaten.

From the station Van Buren walked over to the Delavan and had a short dinner. Then he dressed and started up to the Holland Club to wait until it was time to go to the Artillery Ball at the opera-

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house. This ball was the feature of the Albany social year, except the Charity Ball later in the season, and at the Charity Ball there was nothing except lemonade, polly water, coffee, and the like to drink. The artillery was the only ball where everybody in Albany who had a dress suit and respectable parentage danced and drank. Van Buren arrived when the ball was in full swing. The orchestra of the opera-house had been floored over on a level with the stage. Albany society was divided into groups, and the ball was going on as if it were four or five separate dances, each group occupying a particular section of the floor space. Occasionally a couple from the Elk Street group would gyrate around the floor over the sections of the other groups, who resented the intrusion. The chaperons were divided in like groups, and the same distinctions were carried into the supper-room. The officers of the Venerable Albany Artillery acted as floor managers, looking imposing and uncomfortable in their heavy uniforms. The privates, wearing fur caps two feet high, acted as a military guard, changing every half-hour to give them opportunity to dance. The governor's staff was present in the full uniforms they would wear at the New-Year's reception, and visiting officers from Watervliet Arsenal, Troy, and other military organizations as far off as New York and Buffalo added to the splendor.

Miss Marlow was dancing with a United States army captain when Van Buren found her. He took a seat off the dancing floor to watch her unobserved. She was dressed in crimson-purple and

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black, colors more used by a matron than by young girls. Her ball-gown did not look new even to Van Buren's inexperienced eye. It seemed more like an old favorite. The only jewelry he could see was a jeweled bar which held her hair high on her head. She had pinned across her corsage two or three American Beauty roses. Van Buren wondered who had sent them to her and why he had not thought of doing it himself. Her general color effect was in different shades of red, but ruddier and more crimson than her appearance in the fox furs in the sleigh. She danced well, and Van Buren was content to sit watching her so long as she was in motion. When the waltz was over she went back to her seat in the box where her father was. Van Buren followed her there. His first greeting was to the senator.

"I didn't know you went to dances, senator."

"This is a concession to me," replied Miss Marlow. "He comes to be with me. That is a real compliment. Sometimes he lets me go to a convention to be with him, and that is my return."

"Would that I had such a dutiful daughter," laughed Van Buren.

"Maybe when you are my age, Van Buren, you won't voluntarily go to a dance," said the senator. "Still, I like to see it, only I go home early and leave Mary with her mother."

Mrs. Marlow had left the box to sit with the Elk Street chaperons.

"I don't think father recognizes that all these men have votes," said Miss Marlow. "If he would only look on them as voters instead of dancing men his interest would be aroused."

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"The dress suit has a value in politics," said Van Buren. "In a district like mine in New York a man must dress well to be elected."

"But that's only one district," said the senator. "It is the mass of the people you want with you, and, if class lines are to be drawn, go with the class that holds the most votes."

"Aren't you omitting one thing, senator," asked Van Buren—"the power of social prestige and its effect on public opinion? We had a reform campaign in Schenectady a few years ago. The money, the saloons, and almost all the politicians were on one side. There was a big mass-meeting where all the prominent business men and social leaders, with a few ex-judges and the bishop, sat on the platform in full dress. I don't think half of them took the trouble to register and vote. It was all we could do to get them to the meeting."

"That's the same trouble I found," said the senator. "They think they've discharged their civic duties when they go to a public meeting and allow their names to be used."

"That's entirely true," replied Van Buren, "but we won that election through the effect of their names and presence on the hundreds of small householders and little tax-payers who sat on the benches. They abandoned their usual political habit that once to vote for what seemed to them the good of the community so unanimously expressed by its leading citizens."

"Maybe their wives had something to do with it," queried Miss Marlow. "Weren't there women present at the mass-meeting?"

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"I forgot. The wives and daughters of the prominent citizens sat in the boxes, and many of the audience brought their wives with them."

"I thought so. Women are more of a power in politics than if they voted."

The army captain returned and took Miss Marlow for another dance, a two-step this time. Van Buren sat with the senator.

"Don't you dance, Van Buren?" the senator asked. "I never did when I was a young man, and I think it was a mistake. I wish I had more interests of that kind. It enables one to understand people better, but, personally, I could never see anything in it."

"I like to go to a dance," Van Buren answered, "and of course I dance, but I don't care much for it. It was hammered into me at school, where dancing was part of the drill, and I never got over the compulsory feeling. I suppose to enjoy a dance at its best it must be a matter of impulse and not mechanical."

Judge Barr, of the Court of Appeals, came into the box, and the senator introduced Van Buren to the judge. "Go and make yourself agreeable to the ladies," said he. "I wouldn't keep you on an evening like this."

Van Buren captured Miss Marlow and ousted the captain.

"Miss Marlow, don't you think you owe me several dances that I should have had at the assemblies?"

"What a wholesale request, sir! Hadn't you better begin with one?"

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"That is the way all beginnings are made, one step at a time. So many steps make one dance, so many dances make one pleasant evening, so many pleasant evenings make a season, so many seasons make—"

"So many pleasant recollections, or old age," interrupted Miss Marlow, "it is too soon to see which. I don't think you really want to dance."

"I do. I want one dance, and I don't want any one else to have the others. That is my idea of an agreeable evening, from a man's point of view. Be with one girl, don't dance too much, and pray the fates that she may graciously talk to you in between and drive the other men away."

"That's not a girl's idea. She would never regard the evening as a success if only one man danced with her."

Van Buren waltzed well, a little too mathematically and precisely, but he had a good, even step, and he knew how to hold the girl, not too closely in a semi-embrace, or so far away that they danced around each other, but with an even support that kept their steps together.

"You must have danced a great deal at school," commented Van Buren, when they were walking together after the waltz.

"You mean that I try to lead when I shouldn't. I didn't think you were so observant. The taller girls at school had to dance man, and lead. I have never got over it. You didn't seem to be letting me go my own way, though. To retaliate, did you learn with a broomstick or a chair for a partner. I know that military academy step, and I can tell in

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a minute when I have a partner who went through that drill."

"I confess. We did learn with chairs. It was hard to get anybody to dance girl, and as the dancing-master could only take one at a time the rest of us danced solemnly alone or with a stout chair for partner."

She laughed.

"You are rather a new type, Mr. Van Buren. You aren't really a politician, and I am sure you aren't a reformer, and you aren't exactly what I would call a lawyer, and you don't seem enthusiastic about dancing. How are you to be classified?"

"I recall your interest in chickens. Is that your attitude to men animals? Leghorns, best for eggs, too small to eat. Brahmas, good to eat, too few eggs. Plymouth Rocks, general purpose fowl. Maybe I'm not one nor the other."

"Oh no, men aren't as simple as that. You can't tell the breed by looking at them. But that's nothing to men's attitude towards girls."

"Not girls in the plural—a girl or The Girl. Every girl is different. The more a man studies girls the less he knows them. Men are pretty much alike when you come to know them: like the different kinds of chickens, they are all descendants from the same stock."

"Aren't all women daughters and granddaughters of Eve?" laughed Miss Marlow.

"More or less distantly, I suppose. But there are so many collateral branches and relationships by marriage and not blood."

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It was a major this time who took Miss Marlow away. Van Buren drifted over to the chaperons and chatted a while with them, paying especial attention to Mrs. Marlow, and then left.

XXII



AT the governor's reception the next day Van Buren saw Miss Marlow again. There were two receptions, one in the executive chamber in the Capitol between twelve and one, where the governor and his staff received the judges, the members of the legislature, and the State officials; the other a general reception at the executive mansion later in the afternoon, where the wives of the leading State officials received with the governor's wife and the governor's staff acted as ushers. At this reception Mrs. Marlow was one of the receiving party, and Miss Marlow had her place with the daughters of the comptroller, the State treasurer, the attorney-general, and the secretary of state at the tea-table.

Van Buren went to both receptions. The afternoon reception he had attended before, as it was a general meeting-place for everybody who had gone to the annual Artillery Ball on New-Year's eve. The governor's mansion is on the most southerly of the three hills which make Albany resemble Richmond. Its architecture is political, not artistic, although successive governors have altered the inside until it is fairly comfortable. There are many rooms with halls and folding doors, enabling the

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first floor to be thrown into one reception hall. The governor and Mrs. Governor stand at one end of the hall. The lieutenant-governor and Mrs. Lieutenant-Governor, the comptroller and Mrs. Comptroller, and the other State officials and their wives are ranged in a semi-circle, to which the officers of the governor's staff bring the general population to have their names announced by the governor's military secretary, who is ex-officio a colonel.

At the other end of the main hall is a table with eatables, and along the walls are tea, chocolate, and coffee tables, presided over by the daughters of the State officials. Back of the main hall is a punch and smoking room, where the men politicians cluster after paying their respects to the governor. On the stair landing is the band, playing the campaign melodies and dances and marches.

Almost all of the men have official or military titles. The titles survive the office; once a commissioner always a commissioner, like the colonels and generals of the governor's staff. Every governor appoints a new crop of them, and the titles outwear the uniform and the term of the governor who created them. The nearness of several United States army posts makes the titles of lieutenant and captain rank higher than colonel or general, for there is nothing lower than a colonel of the governor's staff, and a lieutenant or a captain must necessarily belong to a real military organization.

Miss Marlow was again dressed effectively in red, and again without jewelry except in her hair.

"I am beginning to realize the possibilities of red," said Van Buren. "You are teaching me how

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many shades there are, and I never saw you in two shades that are an exact match. I admire your knowledge of color effects."

"It is purely through a sense of duty, Mr. Van Buren," she replied, "and you should not comment on it. I always try to look my best. We women aren't allowed to make laws, or be governors or assemblymen, and we must do the best we can in our own way."

"You succeed admirably."

"I hope I do, but that is not the way to flatter a woman. You really need instruction in other things besides politics. Words weren't made to tell such things to a woman."

"Then I'll be a greater sinner by asking a question. I've noticed you don't wear rings or bracelets or the usual little jewelry of most girls."

"I don't like them. Why should a girl wear rings more than a man? Take engagement rings and wedding rings. I suppose when I get married I shall wear one, for I shouldn't want to be odd; but why should a girl advertise that she is engaged or married when a man doesn't?"

"Maybe the man should. I've known Frenchmen and Germans who did."

"It isn't fair, and it would be better if both sexes did. I can pick out every engaged girl and married woman in the room, but how can one tell about the men?"

"Can't you tell by their looks?"

"You have a guilty look, Mr. Van Buren. If men had to wear rings wouldn't you be wearing one now?"

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"I should like nothing better," Van Buren replied. "I suppose I would require the consent of the girl. Then I might have two rings made exactly alike. That would be an extension of your plan. Not only would the rings show who are engaged, but to whom one is engaged. We might start the custom as pioneers."

"That is a subtle speech. Am I expected to answer it? It sounds something to me like a revised version of the old *Life* joke, 'Miss Jones, if I were to ask you to marry me, what would you say?' I'm not going to talk to you any more about it. Any man who wants to propose to me must go down on his knees and make a beautiful speech, beginning, 'Fair maiden, queen of my heart!' I insist on having a real romance, the kind you read about in the old-fashioned novels."

"I fear men don't go down on their knees any more except in novels."

"So much the worse for them. A man should go down on his knees at least once a day every day of his life. His mother taught him when he was a little boy, and it would be better for him if he kept it up, and that should be his attitude to his wife, too. Women put up with too much from men nowadays."

"Yes. We should return to the old days when a man hired a horse, a good weight-carrier, dapple gray in color, and warranted true and kind under the saddle, and pranced up to the girl's house, and carried her off to some vague place where they lived happily forever after, without telephones, gas-ranges, plumbers, steam heat, and other conven-

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iences regarded as rather necessary these days. Life must have been delightfully inexpensive in those times. The stone castles were always rent free, the servant problem hadn't arisen, and the commutation ticket was an undiscovered device."

"Bravo, you've become enthusiastic at last. Every man has his weakness. Go on riding your hobby-horse. Nobody is content without one."

"What is yours?"

"I told you mine, only you won't let me ride it and show its paces."

"We might try the experiment of driving our hobby-horses in a pair."

"Hobbies aren't broken double. They only go single."

"Perhaps they would trot together once they got better acquainted."

The army captain had been hovering around and stopped the conversation by coming for his cup of tea.

From the governor's reception Van Buren went to the Holland Club, where the New-Year's punch was hospitably flowing, and then took a trolley car to Schenectady. His mother was waiting for him, and they had their New-Year's dinner together.

He had promised to take his mother and Amy to the opening of the legislative session. So they accompanied him, and saw the Bald Eagle of Westchester elected speaker by a party vote over Assemblyman Peters; the lottery of seats, the members choosing their places in the order their names came out of a box; the secretary to the governor appearing with the governor's message

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after a committee had been appointed to notify the governor of the assembly's readiness to be communicated with. Then the assembly adjourned after a resolution to print the governor's message in different languages had been unanimously adopted. Van Buren took his mother and cousin to lunch in the Holland Club annex.

"It was just like a play on the stage," commented Amy, "and it was so appropriate for General Husted to wear a dress suit, even if it was daytime. I like men to dress up on formal occasions. I am so glad I went. I understand why the newspapers call him the Bald Eagle. He is very bald, isn't he? I think baldness is becoming to a man of his age. It goes so well with a dress suit, and he is so much older and better-looking than Assemblyman Peters. He should be elected. Why did you vote for Mr. Peters? And the clerk seemed to know how everybody was going to vote. I saw a man mark on a sheet of paper before you answered. Oh, I forgot. I suppose all the votes were sold, and the clerk knew who bought the most votes and had it all down on that paper, and just called the names to make sure there was no mistake. What a waste of money it must be for the man who buys the votes and doesn't get enough?"

Mrs. Van Buren looked shocked. "Where did you get such notions, Amy? Van would never dream of selling his vote. He voted for Mr. Peters because the Democratic caucus nominated him and Van is a Democratic assemblyman."

"What a pity! I thought Van was paid every time he voted. That's what the *Tribune* says about

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Tammany assemblymen, and I didn't know Van was a Democrat. I thought he was a Tammany man. You must tell me all about the caucus, Van, and why they call it that, and what it does."

"You're getting on too fast, Amy," laughed Van Buren. "Don't try to learn everything at once or you won't have anything left to occupy your spare time. You've learned politics enough for one day."

"Oh, Van," she exclaimed, "I am becoming so wise! I read in a magazine about the French Deputies, and I have a book on the *Growth of the English Parliament*, and I found Bryce's *American Commonwealth* in the library, and the *Tribune* tells me all about the wickedness of Tammany. I am reading them all, and you must explain what everything means, and then we'll talk politics all the time and I'll understand everything you're interested in. Do you shout at the man who stands up and talks the way the French do? I suppose men would take off their hats in Parliament only somebody might sit on them, or perhaps they might be stolen. The *Tribune* says there are Tammany members of the legislature who would take a red-hot stove. I suppose they'd want it for the poor families in New York who are suffering so from the cold. If they did I wouldn't blame them. They should heat the Capitol with a furnace, anyway. How do men sell their votes and what do they do with the money? What is your vote worth? Is it the same price every day, or does it fluctuate? If I had a bill I wanted passed I'd wait until some day when votes were cheap. Don't you think I've learned a great deal?"

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"You certainly have, but you mustn't work too hard at it or try and learn everything at once, for then you would know more about politics than I do, and there wouldn't be anything left for me to tell you."

"Oh, I never could keep pace with you, Van."

"If you are going to apply the Schenectady point of view to New York City politics there will be a vacuum," Van Buren went on; "there isn't anybody in New York whose father and grandfather were born there. Less than one-sixth of the people had American-born fathers, and most of these were born outside of New York City. The Germans, the Irish, the Italians, and the Jews all outnumber those of American descent."

"But what about the nice people?" said Amy. "There must be nice people in New York. I don't mean the Four Hundred of the Sunday newspapers, but men and women with birth and breeding, artists and authors and their friends."

"I've heard of a weekly literary gathering in a basement off Sixth Avenue, where the women have no chaperons and smoke cigarettes. Do you mean them?"

"You know well enough I don't," retorted Amy. "I mean the people of the academies and the books and the magazines. They come from all over the country and settle in New York. Why don't you drop Tammany politics, and write a book, or paint a picture, or something of that sort?"

"That's a new ambition. Which do you prefer, Amy, a portrait of a purple cow or a volume on the world-wide influence of a molecule?"

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"You never take me seriously. I don't mean absurd things. If you want to do good and be famous, write a book that everybody will read and be influenced by."

"Sermons, poetry, or a love-story?"

"Neither, though all the books I like have some love in them."

"That's what a publisher told me the other day. He says men don't read books except the ones they require in their business or profession, so that books to sell must be written for women, and women won't buy a book without love."

"Books should be true to life, and how can one live one's life without love?"

"Is that a proposal?" he laughed. "If it is it is immediately accepted."

"It's nothing of the kind," she snapped.

"I didn't know but that your strong advocacy of women's rights in politics might lead to its natural sequence."


"I don't care to talk to you. I won't be laughed at."

"It isn't laughable at all. I mean it. I believe it is a fact that more proposals are made by women than men, although the man may not always be aware of it. Anyhow, I am sure that most marriages result from the girl's proposing."

"What kind of a girl do you fancy her?"

"She would probably be pretty sure of her man, and then she would do it in some feminine way that would make him think he was doing it. I never heard of a man proposing the way they do in novels."

XXIII

HE local elections in Albany County were held the second week in February, and for want of legislative occupation Van Buren spent some spare time watching the workings of Albany local politics.

Before election day both sides were busy stuffing the registry lists. According to law, no man could vote whose name was not enrolled, and he was supposed to appear personally before the election board and qualify as a voter. No matter how friendly disposed the election officers might be on election day, they could not well show a total vote larger than the registry. To inflate the registry, there was a reciprocal arrangement between the politicians of Albany, Troy, and Cohoes. A gang of Trojans would make the circuit of the Albany polling-places and register various names taken from the Troy directory, with fictitious Albany addresses, then they would go to Cohoes and repeat the operation. Albanians and Cohoesiers would reciprocate in like manner. The price paid was fifty cents per name, and an industrious rounder could register forty to seventy names in a day. There were several registration days and the list was considerably swollen. In this regard of pay-

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ing strict respect to the forms of law, the Albany politicians rather prided themselves, and spoke rather derogatorily of Philadelphia politicians as violators of professional etiquette, because in Philadelphia they do not go to the trouble of actual personal registration, but simply make the election officers, without additional bribes, put on the names of cats and dogs and fictitious persons.

On election day came the physical difficulty of polling this fictitious vote. The contest had become personal and financial. The great corporations of Albany and Troy were furnishing the money on one hand and the office-holders on the other. Men stood outside the polling-places with folded bills between their fingers, like the ticket-seller at the circus or the speculator in front of a theatre, and the floaters auctioned off their franchises to the highest bidder. The common council and the board of supervisors were at stake, as well as the two mayors, and in the close wards votes went up as high as fifteen and twenty dollars.

Van Buren dropped into the polling-place on Washington Avenue, a few doors from the Holland Club, and watched the process. There was a line of voters reaching out to the street. A ragged boy at the head of the line had just given the name James Stevens Thomson, 92 Elk Street, when from the rear of the line stepped Mr. Thomson and challenged.

"You can't vote on my name. Everybody in this room knows me."

The repeater was nonplussed. The chairman of the election board turned to him and said that

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his vote was challenged and he would have to swear it in. He did, and voted, while James Stevens Thomson, Esq., junior member of the firm of Hays, Stevens & Thomson, member of the Holland and a number of New York clubs, was shouting his protests. Nobody in the room interfered, and the policeman standing by saw that the forms of the election law were observed.

In the sixteenth ward in the Willett Street election district, facing the park, Van Buren discovered that the high price of votes had attracted individual repeaters. One of them, a printer named Jimmy Owen, had a list of names of his own. He went in and voted on four of them in succession without leaving the polling-place, swearing in his vote after each challenge. The chairman of the election board became disgusted with this greedy and flagrant breach of political etiquette, and when Owen offered to vote on the fifth name the chairman indignantly said, "Jimmy, you've voted enough here; if you want to vote some more go somewhere else and vote."

In the afternoon Van Buren went to Cohoes and stood on the sidewalk watching the visitors from Troy vote. A Cohoes fireman had them in tow and was supplying the names and sending them into the polling-place. While Van Buren was looking on a special policeman, with a large badge and a boy's baseball bat for a club, strolled up to Van Buren and said,

"G'wan and vote."

"I don't live here. I'm just looking on," replied Van Buren, deprecatingly.

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"Aw, g'wan and vote."

"But I'm a member of the assembly from New York. I just came up to see how you hold elections here."

"If youse ain't goin' to vote, clear out," the special policeman said, in disgust. "We ain't no use for gents what t'inks demselves too good to vote." And he swung the baseball bat threateningly.

Knowing that Senator Marlow would be interested in a personal account of the local election, and drawn by an irresistible impulse to be in Miss Marlow's company, Van Buren called at the Elk Street house on his way back from Cohoes to the club. Mrs. Marlow was having one of her semi-formal teas in the main library. An English bishop was visiting her, and he was receiving informally some of the people Mrs. Marlow thought it desirable to have him meet. Miss Marlow was really glad to see Van Buren, and showed it; it also gave her a chance to escape the visiting bishop and his friends. Van Buren knew the other callers only slightly, and, after being presented to the English bishop, he crossed the room to where a young curate was talking to Miss Marlow. The curate was a good deal of a bore, and Miss Marlow turned to Van Buren with relief.

"I'm so glad you came in, Mr. Van Buren," she said. "I must have somebody to say ungracious things to. You're in politics, and you won't mind, will you? Politics and politicians are bad enough, but I'd rather talk politics than religion or theology, whichever High Church and Low Church comes

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under. I'm always making blunders. The dear bishop—he is a fine-looking man, isn't he?—is visiting the United States to study the effect of the severance of Church and State. He says English politicians so interfere with the revival and perpetuation of the ancient liturgical forms that he really believes the Church must come to the point where it puts politics and political things aside. By 'things' I suppose he means the politicians who don't agree with him."

"I fear I am not up on religious matters as much as I should be. I believe in the religion I was taught by my mother when I was a small boy, but I haven't kept it up as I should. If it weren't for mothers, I think religion would die out." Van Buren was not accustomed to talk religion and changed the subject to the incidents of the local election.

"Father will be in soon and you can tell them to him," Miss Marlow said. "I couldn't go for him to-day and he will be late. He is always late unless I call for him. Really, Mr. Van Buren, I am not interested in politics as much as you seem to think. I am interested in father and his interests, but outside of that I'd rather talk of anything except politics. I hear so much politics. Talk psychology or golf or books or something serious. I prefer serious talk this afternoon."

"We might discuss our respective egos. I never knew I had one until senior year at college, and the fact of its existence hasn't occurred to me since, so we might investigate and find out what has become of it."

"They didn't take me as far as the ego at school.

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I believe such things are reserved for men's colleges. The ego and calculus are two educational heights I have never reached. Some day I intend to look them up in a cyclopedia, but I don't know that I ever shall. It is always good to have something to look forward to."

"'Anticipation is the thief of time,' to give a little twist to an old proverb. If one doesn't do a thing when he thinks of it first he is less likely to do it when he thinks of it again."

"What an easy-going man you are! Don't you ever quarrel?"

"With myself often, but never with any one else if I can avoid it. I might have more friends if I did. An honest fight often makes a good friend."

"Isn't that plagiarized from a school writing-book? I've heard something like it before."

"Of course you have—everything has been said before. Novelty is not the saying of something new, but the putting of it differently."

"Have you a little book of aphorisms in which you put down these clever sayings?"

"No, my verbal memory isn't good enough. I rely solely on the inspiration of the moment. You are an excellent mentor, Miss Marlow."

"That's not at all nicely said. You speak as if I were a bronchial remedy."

"You would doubtless be an influence for good in any sphere."

"Fie! Trying to be sarcastic. You don't do it well. Men's sarcasms are like the blow of a club. The only really refined social sarcasm is feminine."

The senator came in just then, and, after greet-

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ing the bishop and his callers, retired to the library. "You go in and talk politics to him," Miss Marlow said to Van Buren. "I must return to the clergy."

Van Buren began to tell the senator the incidents of the local election. The senator stopped him. "Don't tell me. I don't want to hear or know anything about it. These local factional fights are the curse of the party. Both sides try to drag me in, and I won't have it. What a waste of money and effort. They fight harder to elect an alderman than a President, and this business of repeaters and falsifying the returns is all wrong. I'm not a purist or a reformer in politics; I believe there is a legitimate use for a campaign fund, and money is a good thing to have on election day, if it is handled quietly and not stolen, and its legitimate use is, perhaps, a little beyond the strict letter of the law. In that way politics is something like poker; it is against the law to gamble for money, and it is no more unlawful to cheat at poker than to gamble. But there is all the difference in the world between gambling and cheating, and everybody so regards it. That is the way with my election code of morals. I believe that every vote should be cast by a duly qualified voter and honestly counted, but I am in favor of using all means to induce the duly qualified voter to vote my way. That is what a party organization is for. How are matters in the legislature?"

Van Buren explained that nothing seemed to be going on; no bills of importance had been acted upon, and the daily sessions were perfunctory.

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"That is generally the way during the first few weeks," the senator told him. "The most important measures come up the last days of the session, and shortness of time prevents full discussion. The early days of the session are spent by the promoters of legislation in arranging for the votes. They haven't been to you because you are a dangerous possibility, and more likely to break loose and attack them than not."

"I'm not looking to attack anybody. I'm not after notoriety, but experience."

"There is no telling what you may do when the opportunity presents itself. My advice is to make a good record and come back next year. Two terms are enough. You may tire of politics by that time. If you don't, keep in politics and out of office. I sometimes regret I am in office; a man is so much freer without."

XXIV



AN BUREN settled down to the business of the legislative session and was appointed on the judiciary committee and the committee on miscellaneous franchises. It came about in this way. General Husted had him to lunch one day, and asked him what committees he would prefer. Van Buren asked for the judiciary, as that seemed the most professional of the committees. The Speaker replied that most of the assemblymen who were lawyers preferred to be on the judiciary committee, and he would appoint Van Buren, but there was another committee of much more importance on which he wanted Van Buren to serve, the committee on miscellaneous franchises.

"You see," explained General Husted, with that captivatingly discriminating frankness which always flattered the recipients, "the railroad and the insurance committees are, of course, made up of friends of the large interests involved. The purely political committees follow the suggestions of their party leaders. That eliminates a great body of legislation from possible scandal. There remain certain interests not so well developed along political lines, and not so well established in their alliances and methods of procedure, which the boys some-

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times break loose over. As speaker I am naturally desirous that everything should be seemly and decorous, and that there should be as little as possible for public scandal to dwell upon. I knew your father years ago, when I first came to the assembly, and I know that a man like you is above financial considerations. Of course I expect any young man to be careful of his professional and political future, but the most foolish thing a man starting out in politics can do is to sell his vote for cash. Of course I know no such influence could appeal to you. To make friends who will aid one in after life is judicious. I myself have always tried to serve my friends. I assume you will also do so. I am going to put you on the committee on miscellaneous franchises, and all I ask is that you consult me as your friend, an older and more experienced man in legislative matters, whenever anything of importance comes before your committee."

Van Buren thanked him and wondered what it all meant. Clearly the speaker was giving more thought to the committee on miscellaneous franchises than to the judiciary or appropriations committees, and the personal consideration was flattering.

It was February before Van Buren's committee met. The chairman of the committee on miscellaneous franchises was a veteran legislator who represented a Republican district of Ulster County. He was superintendent of a Sunday-school at home, and his Albany reputation was that of a stern supporter of the Sunday laws and the penal code, and also the best man to look after corporate interests.

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A number of bills had been referred to the committee when Elder Perkins called the members together and submitted the bills to them. He was especially gracious and benevolent to the new members.

"These are the measures which so far have been submitted to us," he said. "So far as I can see, there is no haste in considering them. Read them over carefully and digest their contents. Some may be wholly good, others wholly bad, the mass indifferent. Let us winnow out the wheat from the chaff. I take it for granted that we are all here solely in the interests of our constituents and the State, and that our action will be such as shall best conserve those interests."

One of the old members almost snickered.

"The old man has made that speech every session I've been with him on this committee."

"It seems to me to be very good," replied Van Buren.

"Right you are. He'll digest their contents. If the people behind them don't produce the right kind of digestive pills some of those bills won't be digested this session."

The newspapers had been making some stir about one of the bills known as the Iroquois Power Bill, introduced by Assemblyman Jones, of Herkimer County, who kept a country store on the banks of the Erie Canal. This bill, in general terms, gave the Iroquois Power Company the right to take and use the waters of such streams, lakes, and ponds as might be advantageous for the production of power, and to utilize and sell the power and surplus water

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to such customers as it might find. Van Buren had read the bill a number of times and could see no reason for the newspaper talk against it. The same bill had been before two previous legislatures and had failed of passage. Elder Perkins had opposed it both years.

Hovering around the corridors, committee-rooms, and document-rooms, Van Buren often saw several prosperous-looking men, who were pointed out to him as lobbyists, and with whose names he became familiar through the newspapers. Gradually they had come to bow to him, but none had ever asked him to vote or not to vote, or even spoken to him of legislation. The majority of these men lived at the Delavan, and their rooms were used as general poker and supper rooms. Everybody was welcome to eat, drink, and gamble, and the losers, if they did not push their losses too heavily, were not bothered about payment. Van Buren drifted in to the little poker games from time to time and saw no harm in them. The stakes were not heavy, the suppers were not heavy, and there was little talk of legislation.

The king of the lobby, Colonel Jim Phillips, Van Buren never saw, and would not have known of his existence except for the newspapers, which said he had charge of the Iroquois Power Bill and was going to pass it. Colonel Phillips lived at the Delavan, occupying a good part of one floor. His meals were served in his private dining-room. He had an office force, and a set of books which were reputed to contain the private records of legislation for twenty years and the story of the life and weak-

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nesses of every member of the legislature during that time. Several of the lobbyists Van Buren had seen hanging around the Capitol were reputed to be Colonel Phillips's runners and messengers. One of these, Fred Tree, had got into the habit of passing the time of day with Van Buren, but that was all. It was rather a disappointment to him that none of the lobbyists approached him on legislative matters. Not that he desired bribes to be offered him, but that his legislative life would be incomplete without experiencing every phase of it.

Towards the last of February, however, the legislature became more active. Minor bills were called up for passage, among them the bill to remove the menagerie from Central Park to one of the new parks near the Bronx. The assemblyman from the Central Park district, T. Percy Horsford, Esq., was the son of a man who had become rich through Horsford's Holesome Household, a universal remedy for family ailments, the dose varying from a teaspoonful for a child to a tablespoonful for a man. Mrs. T. Percy Horsford was the daughter of an impoverished Knickerbocker family who were more prominent socially in the last century than in this one. T. Percy himself was nominated to the assembly through the use of his father's check-book, and had taken up politics, as he explained, "to elevate it from the disrepute into which it had fallen through being left wholly to the lower classes." He frequently reminded his associates of his object, and in his speeches prided himself on his representing the "better element." This menagerie bill was introduced by him, and its passage was desired

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by his constituents who lived on the Fifth Avenue side of the park and were annoyed by the crowds and the animals. His fellow - assemblymen, with whom T. Percy, as they called him, was not popular, were having a little fun over the bill, worrying him by offering amendments. Assemblyman Keegan, of Judge Murphy's district, the total-abstaining saloon-keeper whom Van Buren had first met on the Tammany train, and who had stood by the judge when he was deposed, offered an amendment striking out the words "Bronx Park" and inserting "Paradise Park." Paradise Park is a little triangle of dead grass and two dead saplings at the junction of the streets that make Five Points, and is in the heart of Assemblyman Keegan's district.

Although opposed by T. Percy, as were all the other amendments, this amendment was adopted. Boiling with indignation, T. Percy moved to reconsider the vote by which the amendment was carried, and explained to the rural assemblymen that Paradise Park was not a park at all, and had not room for one of the many buildings which held the animals. There were no facilities for the care of the animals, and the zoological society in charge of them wanted the transfer made to Bronx Park.

Assemblyman Keegan had offered the amendment in jest and explained that he was willing to withdraw it. "Me constituents would like to have those animals where dey could see dem without paying street - car fare, but mebbe if dey was down our way dey wouldn't last long. I understand why the gentleman from the terrapin district doesn't want dem animals. His constituents is dudes, and

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if dem animals—dem elephants and tigers and rhinoceroses—was to break loose in the gentleman's district dey would eat up the honorable gentleman's constituents, and dere would be no constituents left to return him to this honorable body, while if dose wild animals was to break loose in me district, me constituents would chaw dem up."

Keegan raised himself on his toes and brought down his clinched fists in illustration of the manner in which his constituents would demolish the animals.

Mr. Horsford was much annoyed at his remarks, and, rising, said that "the hoodlum who fitly represents Five Points needs instruction in the requisites of ordinary civility. My constituents are gentlemen whose fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers were gentlemen when the hoodlum's constituents were roaming the bogs of Ireland or the mountains of Sicily, ignorant alike of the alphabet and the existence of the United States."

There was a hush in the assembly at this outbreak. Assemblyman Keegan was personally popular with his fellow-members, who knew he was simply jesting, without desire to wound or insult any one, while Mr. Horsford's speech was maliciously insulting. It looked at first as if Keegan would assault T. Percy and demolish him as one of the minor animals. Keegan's jaw snapped and the veins stood out on his temples, but he kept his seat and sat silent. Among the members of that assembly were Robert Ray Hamilton, grandson of Alexander Hamilton, Hamilton Fish, Jr., and Johnson Livingston de Peyster, a descendant of Sir William Johnson,

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Chancellor Livingston, and numberless De Peysters. They were all friends of Keegan and rather averse to associating with T. Percy.

The menagerie bill was debated for some time, various assemblymen offering humorous amendments to get a rise out of T. Percy, who took the fun angrily, and berated his fellow-members for their lack of regard for the wishes of the "better element," in whose behalf he had introduced the bill. A recess was taken, and the members tiring of the fun, the roll was about to be called on the bill when Assemblyman Keegan again rose to his feet.

"Let's stop this and pass the gentleman's bill." The sneer Keegan put into the word gentleman was worse than T. Percy's epithet of hoodlum. "We have been hearing the gentleman all day talk about the better element and the best people, and about him representing constituents with ancestors. Nobody in me district has an ancestor or wants one, or would know it if dey saw it, but dere is people in the State what has ancestors, genuine ancestors, and I believe in giving dem an appropriation the same as anybody else, and I'm in favor of the appropriation this bill calls for. But if the people what has ancestors wants this bill, why don't dey have the members of this body what's got genuine ancestors represent them and say so. Dere's me friend Colonel Hamilton—"

"Colonel" was Assemblyman Keegan's title of dignity, and as he waved his hand towards Robert Ray Hamilton the "Colonel" rose and bowed in friendly acquiescence.

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"Dere's me friend Colonel Fish."

Hamilton Fish, Jr., arose to his full height of six feet four, bowed with dignity to the speaker, and again to Keegan, and remained standing.

"Dere's me old friend Johnsie de Peyster."

Colonel Johnson Livingston de Peyster, the man who raised the first United States flag in Richmond after the Confederate evacuation, and a genuine colonel this time, rose and bowed and stood with his two associates.

"Dey's friends of mine, and real friends," shouted Keegan, his voice breaking with emotion, while the assembly cheered in appreciation. "Dey has real ancestors. As for this man, this T. Percy Horsford, why, he ain't got no granfadder."

A roar of laughter and applause lasted through the calling of the roll. The clerk marked the members' names without their answering. There would be a lull and some one would shout, "Why, he ain't got no granfadder." T. Percy never recovered; his legislative career was at an end. Later in the session he tried to speak on several measures affecting the "better element," but his oratory had lost its power, and cries of, "Where's his grandfather?" would be heard in interruption. He had lost the respect and sympathy of his associates.

XXV



FEW days after the entertaining debate on the menagerie bill Van Buren was surprised to hear the clerk announce, among the other committee reports, the Iroquois Power Bill as favorably reported by the committee on miscellaneous franchises. His first impulse was to rise and question the report and denounce its accuracy. He knew he had attended every meeting of the committee of which he had notice, and he knew the Iroquois Power Bill had not even been considered or debated at any of those meetings. He had taken little personal part in the committee's sessions, except to be regular in his attendance and to listen attentively to whatever was said and done. In like manner he had sat through the assembly sessions without making a speech, voting as Assemblyman Peters voted on all questions where there was a party decision, and not voting at all on some questions he did not understand and when party lines were not drawn.

With the experience of T. Percy Horsford fresh in his mind, Van Buren thought it a wise policy to find out what was going on before he said anything. Looking around the assembly chamber, he noticed Elder Perkins watching him intently.

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He left his seat, and, going over to the elder, said,

"I don't recollect the committee voting to report that Iroquois bill."

"I didn't see you at yesterday's meeting," replied the elder.

"I didn't get any notice of a meeting yesterday."

"That must have been an oversight of the clerk; I'll have to reprimand him."

"Don't bother, just tell me what is going on."

Elder Perkins came near forgetting himself and sighing with relief. "I didn't think you felt that way about it or I'd have seen personally that you were notified of the meeting. Usually I leave all that to the clerk. You and I are both at the Delavan; come around to my room to-night and I'll talk to you. I've some old Ulster County apple-jack that I don't think anything in New York or Albany either can equal."

The elder was trying to be as friendly as he knew how to be. Van Buren left him and after the session went in to see the speaker. General Husted beamed on him with his perennial smile.

"Well, my boy, what can I do for you? Any little bill that you want? By-the-way, I haven't seen much of you lately. How are you getting on? Not making any speeches yet, I see."

"I wanted to ask you about that Iroquois Power Bill. It was reported this morning from my committee and I didn't know anything about it. What should I do?"

"Just what you are doing. Come to me for advice. Some of our friends seem to have interested

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themselves in it. Last year it wasn't in very good hands—speculative promoters, I might say. Why, they might have used that franchise as a crow-bar to pry into every power company and electric light company and water company in the State. That would never do. This is a broad franchise, pretty liberal; but I believe in being liberal to the right people, and a little bird told me—there are a lot of little birds around here—that the original people became discouraged and sold out and some of our friends are behind the bill now. It's a good bill in the right hands."

It was a temptation to Van Buren to make a speech denouncing the bill. Several reporters from the New York newspapers came to him and asked if he was not going to oppose it. He replied that it was his first term in the assembly and he did not pretend to have learned all about everything in a few weeks. The bill progressed rapidly. It appeared in committee of the whole the day after it was reported from the committee on miscellaneous franchises, and the committee of the whole ordered it to a third reading without debate. The assembly rather expected to hear from T. Percy Horsford, as he had been regularly denouncing everything, but he had not recovered from his experience with the menagerie bill.

Usually it took several days to have a bill engrossed, but the day after the Iroquois Power Bill had gone through the committee of the whole it appeared on the clerk's desk, engrossed, and on the third reading calendar, and the speaker announced that the vote would be taken on its passage. There

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had been no speeches, but Elder Perkins, whose oratory was of the camp-meeting order, felt called to explain why he favored the bill after having opposed it for two years.

"You, Mr. Speaker, and the older members of this body are doubtless familiar with the provisions of this measure," he began. "This same bill was before this body last year and the year before, and you may recall that on both those occasions I successfully opposed it, not on its merits, but because of the methods employed by its supporters. On its merits this is a most meritorious measure. It provides that the pure, limpid, abundant waters of the beautiful Iroquois may be conveyed to our great cities for the cleansing and the purification of the inhabitants thereof, and leading them thereby to that godliness whereof the proverb speaks. Though an humble representative of a rural constituency, where pure water abounds and abhorrent vice is absent, I feel for the denizens of our great cities; I feel charged with a certain responsibility for their moral and sanitary condition, and I know no better way to discharge that duty which rests on my own conscience than to vote for this bill now that it is in clean hands. I understand that the real purpose of this bill is to supply pure, untainted, uncontaminated water, that blessing from the skies and the springs, to the teeming millions of our great metropolis. That would be a blessing and we should enjoy its bestowal.

"Speaking of the past, Mr. Speaker, while my views have always been as I have stated, I could not support this meritorious measure because of

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the influences and methods which surrounded it. The slimy trail of the lobby was wound around every section of it. Lobbyists, those human vermin that infest the corridors of this magnificent and beautiful Capitol, had charge of this bill, and besought support for it by the offer of stock and bonds in the Iroquois Power Company to secure votes for its passage. Much as I desired to bring pure water to the poor of our great cities, I could not support a tainted bill.

“This year, Mr. Speaker, there are no such influences or rumors. I thank God, from whom all blessings flow, that there has been no report, even in the most suspicious and prying organs of the public press, that such influences have been at work this year or that members of this body have been approached with corrupting offers of stock and bonds—”

It was a beautiful, taking speech, and Elder Perkins was just closing his unctuous peroration when Assemblyman Keegan, unable to resist the temptation, although he was going to vote for the bill, rose and interrupted.

“Yes, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is right. This year it's not stock and bonds, it's cash.”

Elder Perkins looked reproachfully at Keegan, who was laughing heartily, and sat down. The roll-call proceeded and the bill passed. There were seventeen negative votes, of which Peters and Van Buren cast two, and the speaker did not vote.

“You did right, Van Buren,” said Peters, afterwards. “Keep your record straight, your mouth shut, and your eyes open. You're learning. I was


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afraid you might take this as your opportunity to make a splurge."

"I'm not here to make a splurge," replied Van Buren. "I'm here to watch the wheels go round and see why and how they revolve."

Van Buren's only speech during the session was prepared with care, and he waited for the occasion to make its delivery opportune and seemingly spontaneous. It was to be an aggressive defence of Tammany democracy and an attack on the kind of reform that sporadically springs up in New York City from time to time, like the periodical locust plague, and had its representatives in such politicians as T. Percy Horsford. This speech he worked over and rewrote and polished. He put in it references to Commissioner Mahoney and a eulogy of Mr. Coulter, as a man whose word was good and who stood for order and organization, without which nothing in any line of human effort could be successfully carried on. He thought of submitting the speech to Miss Marlow, but he still doubted her interest in his political welfare, and, to tell the truth, he was afraid of her sarcasm.

XXVI

HILE awaiting a suitable opportunity to deliver his solitary speech, Van Buren extended his acquaintance with the legislators and their ways. He looked up Elder Perkins one evening, and he and the elder talked politics and drank the Ulster County apple-jack for several hours. The elder was a mine of political recollections. He was one of the founders of the Republican party, and had held offices of all kinds and everywhere. President Lincoln had appointed him minister to Venezuela, he had been consul to Venice, agent in charge of the Osage Indians, United States revenue collector in southern Alabama, a district judge in Arkansas, and now he had come back in his old age to close his career as member of the assembly from the county where he was born, and where he sought to make his peace with his conscience and even up the balance for some episodes in his earlier life by scrupulously fulfilling the duties of superintendent of the Sunday-school he had attended when a boy.

The elder enlightened him about the Iroquois Power Bill. The members of the committee had received five hundred dollars apiece for a favorable report, and Van Buren could have had his bit only the elder

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knew he wouldn't take it, and so it was no use offering it. The elder himself had not received any cash, but the president of the reorganized company had promised to make the elder's son assistant to the chief-engineer, and the elder had a few stock certificates which he intended to give his son to strengthen him with the management of the company.

"I thought you were a different kind of man," said the elder, "and I want to apologize to you. I thought you had the makings of another T. Percy Horsford, but I should have known better, and I'm glad to say so. You're getting on very well for a new man. You ain't crooked, and still you don't go priding yourself on it and abusing everybody else."

"How large a proportion of the one hundred and twenty-eight assemblymen sell their votes?" Van Buren asked, with pardonable curiosity.

"What do you mean by 'sell their votes'?" The elder was somewhat querulous over the question. "There may be fifty you can buy over the counter like a cigar or a bill of goods for cash on the spot. There are sixty more you can get if you offer judicious inducements and go at it right. I suppose I'm one of that kind. Then there are fifteen or twenty, either freaks like T. Percy or men like yourself and Hamilton and Fish and the like, who ain't in need of money and can't be influenced that way. But any man can be got at if the right gewgaw is dangled before his eyes. With some it's the long green, with others it's a stack of chips or a bottle or a woman. When it isn't one it's the other.

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They are bound to take a fall out of every man some day."

Van Buren was in the senate chamber the day the Iroquois Power Bill came up for passage there. Its course in the senate had been difficult. The newspapers came out with charges that the assemblymen who voted for the bill had received two hundred and fifty dollars apiece and that the money had been dispersed by Colonel Jim Phillips. They redoubled their charges against the bill; it would monopolize the water supply of the State and put the people of the cities in the hands of this corporation; it would give away the reserve water supply of the Erie Canal, which would have to be bought back at some future day when the canal would be enlarged; nothing would be paid for this valuable franchise except such sums as were expended in its passage.

This advertising had added to the avarice and voracity of many of the senators, and, although the senate was only a quarter as numerous as the assembly, the senators asked more than quadruple the money for their vote. While the members of the assembly committee on miscellaneous franchises received only five hundred dollars apiece, the Senators on the corresponding senate committee demanded five thousand dollars apiece and got it. As a result the senators outside the committee thereupon raised their prices to twenty-five hundred dollars and higher. Colonel Jim Phillips held off from doing business at these quotations; not that they were prohibitory as regards the Iroquois Power Bill, but he did not like to have the senators think that they could arbitrarily raise the rates on a bill he had charge of. As a result, when the bill came

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on for its final passage, Colonel Jim secured only the necessary seventeen votes required by the State constitution to pass it. Among the senators left out was Senator Jones, from Delaware County, a senatorial counterpart of Elder Perkins, only more sanctimonious, and so notorious that he was satirically called Honest John Jones. Honest John was not included in the seventeen for whose votes negotiations had been closed. Fred Tree, in getting quotations for Colonel Jim, had suggested the matter to Honest John and refused to pay the five thousand dollars Honest John demanded, telling him to go further and fare worse.

Accordingly Honest John prepared a speech boiling with indignation, and told Fred Tree its contents. Tree said the colonel might add five hundred to the twenty-five hundred dollars the others were getting, to compensate Honest John for his literary efforts, but that was the limit. Honest John reminded him that the Senators on the committee were getting five thousand dollars apiece and that he was as good as they, whereupon Tree again told him to go further.

When the roll was to be called on the bill one of the journal clerks, who represented Colonel Jim behind the senate desks, advised Tree to give Honest John his price, as it was too narrow a margin to provide for only the requisite number of votes. Tree refused, and Honest John was left to make his denunciation of the bill. He waited until the roll was called, and in answering to his name he sailed into the bill in fine forensic style, with details and epithets. So strenuous did his speech become that Senator Tome, whose name was the

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last of the seventeen with whom arrangements had been made, casually strolled out into the lobby and said,

"Fred, voting 'aye' after that speech is worth another thousand."

"Not on your life," replied Tree, who scented danger.

Honest John was continuing his perambulating speech. Tree returned to the senate chamber and took a seat near the rail, where Honest John saw him at once, and watched Tree lean his elbow on the railing and hold up four fingers. With his eye still on Tree, Honest John continued his speech, shaking his head vigorously. "No, Mr. President, we are entitled to written replies to these newspaper arguments, replies that are as detailed as the accusations themselves."

Tree saw trouble if Honest John kept on, with Tome also trying to raise and no telling who would be the next. He hurriedly wrote on a slip of paper: "Shut it off. You're on," and had a page lay the note on Honest John's desk.

Without ceasing his flow of language, Honest John picked up the note and looked at Tree, who nodded. Honest John had accomplished his object, and closed his speech as follows:

"These arguments, Mr. President, would impel any man governed solely by reason to vote against this bill, and, following the promptings of my judgment, I am, as I said, opposed to it. But the thought that pure water, no matter what it costs in money and political corruption, is a necessity to the life of every prattling babe, every innocent

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child, every mother in our great cities; this thought, Mr. President, appeals to my sentiment, to my heart, to my sympathy, and, wrong though I know it is to yield to these impulses, I vote 'aye.'"

Fred Tree returned to the lobby, where Senator Tome was walking up and down smoking. "We've got seventeen votes already without you, Tome," said Tree. "Take what's coming to you or leave it."

The bill passed—"ayes," nineteen; "noes," ten; absent, three. Senator Sutter, who cast the additional "aye" vote, voted honestly and gratuitously, being touched by Honest John's sentimental appeal.

The senatorial success in raising the price for votes in disproportion to its numbers caused so much feeling among the assemblymen that bills introduced by the senators were discriminated against in the assembly. Senator Brown was an innocent sufferer from this feeling. He had a bill to change the name of the Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church of Bleecker Street to the Holy Zion African Church, a harmless measure to please some of his colored constituents. To his surprise, the assembly declined to pass the bill, so many members failing to vote that the bill lacked the constitutional majority. Senator Brown had in his desk a bundle of thousand-dollar bonds of the Aureola Gold and Silver Company, a fake concern in New York which had been closed by the police, one of whom sent the senator a bundle of the bonds as a joke. On hearing of the defeat of the bill and the reasons for the assembly's action, he thought of a plan to get even with them for their exhibition

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of jealousy, and, going over to the assembly with the package of bonds, he had the bill at once reconsidered and the roll called again on its final passage. While the clerk was calling the roll Senator Brown went from assemblyman to assemblyman handing out bonds, and whispering, "Vote 'aye.'" He fared successfully until he handed one bond to Assemblyman Strohauptner.

"Nein, Freddy," said Strohauptner. "Zwei." Laughing to himself, Brown handed over another bond.

This time the bill passed, and after the result was announced Brown went to Strohauptner and said: "Look here, Max, I want that extra bond back. I can't make my accounts balance. The speaker is the only man, except you, that was to get two bonds."

"Ain't Maximilian Strohauptner just as good as General James William Husted? Ve have von vote each. Von vote, zwei bonds. Nein, Freddy. Dose is pretty bonds."

Brown pleaded with Strohauptner, and offered to pay him fifty cents on the dollar, in cash, for the bonds, which is regarded as a good legislative discount, stocks and bonds being somewhat discredited as a result of the overactivity of some corporate printing-presses, followed by reorganization and the wiping out of the legislative contingent. Strohauptner's cupidity was excited by the offer, and he refused to compromise for less than ten per cent. off for cash. The other assemblymen by this time were on to the joke, and stiffened Strohauptner not to take less than par. It was not until

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Strohauptner tried to sell the bonds for par in New York that he would believe he had been imposed upon, and then he was furious.

It was near the end of the session that Van Buren delivered his one speech. The occasion was one of T. Percy Horsford's numerous bills to reform New York, and to make people change their habits, manners, and desires by legislation. Van Buren's speech fitted in appropriately, and he added a few extemporaneous remarks on T. Percy and his kind. The speech took half an hour to deliver, and was listened to intently by the assembly, who always pay more attention to a man who speaks infrequently. The newspaper reporters, who had been desirous of printing something about Van Buren, seized the opportunity and printed most of the speech with a description of the speaker.

XXVII



IN his return to New York at the end of the session Van Buren was cordially welcomed by Commissioner Mahoney.

“You didn’t make a fool of yourself, and the old man is very friendly to you for what you said about him in your speech. I see the *Post* and *Tribune* say that any man who will make a speech like yours, defending and praising Mr. Coulter, isn’t fit to hold a public office. That will send you to the senate sure.”

When Van Buren went that evening with Commissioner Mahoney to the Democratic Club they found Mr. Coulter holding his usual levee. Mr. Coulter went out of his way to greet Van Buren and hold him up as an example to those present. Grasping Van Buren’s hand, he said, in a voice that could be heard to every corner of the café:

“There’s a man for you, commissioner. Goes to Albany and keeps out of scandal, and behaves himself, and makes a good record, and never makes a speech or gets into the newspapers except once, and that time to say a good word for me and the party. There’s an example for a lot of these district leaders. We’ll have to send him to the senate this fall to show the rest of them. Mr. Van Buren, you have

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done me and the organization credit, and we want to show you that we reward creditable men."

"Look out for one thing, and don't become a reformer," Commissioner Mahoney added. "Don't be one of the goody-goodies."

"No fear of that," said Van Buren. "I've heard a great deal about you, commissioner, and I know you don't make money off women and gambling-houses, and you won't stand for it either. I believe a man can be a Tammany man and be honest. If he can't Tammany should throw him out."

The commissioner was pleased at the retort. "Well, it would be better for Tammany Hall if a few of those gents were thrown out. The old man gets the credit for all they do, and some of it is pretty raw—tougher than I can stand for, for one. They're on the make all the time. It's nothing but graft. They're no good to anybody. I'd be glad to see the old man throw them all out. No man can live a happy life with his pockets filled with dirty dollars. I'm glad you saw the old man himself. He thinks a great deal of you, and we'll send you to the senate."

"Isn't the senate district more strongly Republican than the assembly district?"

"That's what the old man wants to put you up for. He doesn't know any one else who might win."

"Do you know, commissioner, I'm not very enthusiastic over all this. I suppose I should be gratified to be a senator, but what does it all lead to, anyhow? I enjoyed my winter in the assembly, but I'd hate to be sentenced to ten years of it."

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The next evening, while on his way to the University Club, Van Buren ran across State Senator Elling. The senator was the Republican boss of Schenectady County, and practised law to fill in the intervals of political life. He explained that he was down in New York to see about his political fences for the fall, and suggested that if Van Buren desired to extend his political acquaintance he should accompany him to call on the Republican boss. Van Buren gladly acquiesced. Senator Elling explained that there were two Republican headquarters, one by day and the other by night. The day headquarters were at the business office of the boss, on lower Broadway, while the night headquarters they could visit at once, as their location was just across Madison Square at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. The two walked across the square and through the hotel lobby, past the clerk's desk to the red plush-covered lounges in the corner. There was an interesting group gathered there. In the corner was a gray-bearded, elderly, well-dressed gentleman, clad in a silk-faced frock-coat, dark trousers, and shoes that were not patent leather. He wore a silk hat and on one hand a glove, with which he made gestures when talking. His voice was soft and his manner gentle and easy. The group around him manifested none of the cringing deference which Van Buren had noticed at Tammany Hall, and especially at the Democratic Club. They were a different class and type of men, more of the genus of country lawyers, who looked as if from their first appearance in the world they had been clad in frock-coats and silk hats, and their attitudes and low, semi-whispering

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tones bore out their likeness to the country lawyer in consultation.

"This is the Amen Corner," explained Senator Elling. "Here is where we all gather evenings to discuss the general affairs of state. The reporters come here for their political news items."

"Why is it called the Amen Corner?"

"There is an old custom of saying 'Amen' when one subject has been thoroughly thrashed out and it is time to talk about something else. Here is where the political anecdote originates and the stories you read in the morning papers are constructed; it is the political news centre of the State."

Van Buren was introduced to several of the Ameners. The Republican boss greeted him cordially. "I knew your father, Mr. Van Buren. I think he would be with us on the issues of to-day. I recall hearing an eloquent speech of his in the campaign of 1860, when he denounced the Republican party for its invasion of property rights and its attack on established institutions."

"I believe in the same traditions of Democracy now," said Van Buren, "though I do not think the party lines and issues are as clearly defined nowadays. Politics seems to be more of a business."

"It has its social side still."

Senator Elling took Van Buren into the hotel bar-room. The Ameners did not seem given to drinks. It was more of a social gathering, like a group of farmers swapping stories at a country grocery or lawyers sitting around the hotel fire-place after the adjournment of court.

"We all report to the old man on our arrival in

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town," said Senator Elling. "He would be hurt if we didn't. It is a sort of a family gathering. On Sundays so many of us from up the State are here that there is a regular Sunday-school, with the old man as teacher. He never gives orders, but merely consults and suggests. That is why he comes by his name of 'The Easy Boss.' His voice is never raised, and there are no thunderings or threats. But the scholars, when they do not take kindly to his suggestions, soon find themselves out of the fold. Some of them have been coming here for twenty years."

"Well, I must say they seem longer lived and better preserved than the Tammany leaders," replied Van Buren.

"They are a different type of men, with different methods. They suit the rural districts. It won't be long before every county in the State outside of New York is Republican. The very tactics which built up Tammany in New York alienate the old-time Democrats up the State."

"One would think you claimed to embody all the virtue and respectability in the State."

"That is what we do. We are the better element, the people of property and substance, the pillars of the community who go regularly to church and whose paper is good at the banks."

"How do you reconcile that with the way you buy votes? You are demoralizing the whole rural constituency. I saw your workers paying as high as twelve dollars a vote in Schenectady last fall."


"That is a sad necessity. Still, it brings about a distribution of prosperity and tends to equalize the

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benefits. The corporations which receive political favors contribute on the one hand, and the poor voter benefits on the other. The man who sells his vote is eliminated in considering the demands of the various interests, and thus a large class of the population, most ignorant and debased, need not be considered, which would otherwise, in a democracy like ours, based on popular suffrage, be the object of demagogic appeals and socialistic legislation. Buying votes is the balance-wheel which regulates the suffrage."

"That is an argument. Better disfranchise them altogether and save the money."

XXVIII

HE session had come and gone without making more definitely certain any of the matters with which Van Buren was concerned. His theory that things left alone settled themselves was working to a certain extent, but nothing seemed finally settled. His legislative career so far had not been a failure, but that was because one cannot fail without unsuccessfully trying to do something, and all he had tried to do he had accomplished. His speech had succeeded, he had made no enemies, and he was to have the opportunity to try it over again in the senate if he could make it.

He had not seen Miss Marlow since the close of the legislative session in April. All things considered, he did not feel satisfied with himself. Something must be done, and he decided to go to Albany. When he reached Albany, instead of going to the club he went straight to the Marlow house. As luck would have it Miss Marlow was coming down the steps, and the stable-man was standing by the horse hitched to her runabout.

"I just came up from New York to see you," began Van Buren, half mendaciously, "and I find you flitting."

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"Would you have me stay in the house on a fine June day like this? You may flit, too, if you wish, as far as the Country Club. I'm to pour tea this afternoon, and I'd much rather have you than the groom."

"Thank you for the assurance."

"It isn't a matter of course at all. Many's the time I'd rather have the groom than any man I know. One doesn't have to talk to the groom."

"I, too, can be silent."

"Yes, but it wouldn't be natural."

Miss Marlow picked up the reins and Van Buren seated himself beside her. He sat silently watching her face and her hair, the set of her teeth, their white line disclosed by her mobile mouth, and the turn of her wrist, and the way she held her whip, and the desire to possess her came strong upon him. All nature was blossoming, the buds were open, the birds were singing; he felt his blood tingling in harmony with the sap that was running to the tips of the tree leaves. It was nature's mating season. The same physical action came upon him. It was the season of youth, and why should not youth enjoy the season, for soon enough it would be over and he would know them no more forever. He wanted her. The world was made up of them alone, the day was a stage-setting for them alone, and why should he not tell her so? He would tell her, but he did not know how to begin, and without a beginning he continued to sit silent.

She had driven up State Street and through the park out to the toll-gate, and on to the western turnpike that starts at Albany and ends at Buffalo

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—a dreamy, peaceful old road there is no missing or straying from. It was laid down with a ruler across the map, regardless of grades or soil, wide enough for four stage-coaches to go abreast, and planked over on one side for heavy carting, to keep the wheels out of the sand. Miss Marlow steered the horse to the right to avoid bouncing over the planks.

"You have my permission to talk," she said. "You didn't take seriously what I said, did you? You haven't said a word since."

"I was thinking."

"Highly commendable occupation. I do it, sometimes, myself."

"But I was thinking the same thing over and over again."

"Don't do that. Think of something else. I do. I have never got over being taken, when I was a little girl, to drive on the road past the old almshouse and seeing a poor crazy woman behind one of the barred windows. I was told she was a monomaniac. I knew it was something awful, though I didn't know what the word meant, and now that I know what it means I think it is still more awful."

"But mine are pleasant thoughts."

"I am positively not going to ask what they are. When one has thoughts one should do them up in a little bundle and treat them like Bartholomew. Don't you recall the beautiful verse about Bartholomew? I always liked such verses."

"Why not write a few or inspire them?"

"Prepare to be inspired and act as amanuensis."

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Let me know when the inspiration's voltage is high enough and you are ready to begin."

"Why are you always sarcastic?"

"In the first place, I'm not. In the second, it's an inherited family failing, something like gout, only not so painful. We should cultivate ancestral qualities. Nothing is so comfortable as a friendly infirmity."

The horse turned in from the turnpike to the Country Club. The house was an old stone Dutch farm-house with modern additions and a veranda. The golf-links were between the house and the main road and on either side. From the wide porch the view stretched south a dozen miles to the Helderbergs, and the angle of vision was low enough to expose the blue Helderberg hills and extend on a clear day to the gray Catskills, forty miles away. A little ravine back of the club-house had been dammed to make a lake and rowing course for a half-mile through the pine woods. It was such a comfort to be in a place like that after New York City and the four hours on the train.

Miss Marlow entered the spacious room into which the first floor of the old farm-house had been thrown, and began her duties at one of the tea-tables in front of the capacious fireplace that burned whole cord-wood and gave light enough in the evening to dance by.

"My blessings go with you," said Van Buren. "I'll sit here awhile and look at the hills and keep on thinking."

It was too pleasant an afternoon to stay in the house, and the wood fire made the room almost un-

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comfortably warm. The golf-players preferred the links, and there was nobody to pour tea for except a few of the older women, who poured their own tea when they wanted any and mildly discussed one of the prevailing and well-bred scandals for which Albany is noted. Such open social sores as divorces, elopements, and the like are frowned upon in Albany and never allowed among the nice people. But delightfully half-hidden, seemly, and proper scandals are always going on. Miss Marlow did not care to be one of the scandal-swappers, and returned to the veranda where Van Buren was still sitting. He came over to her when he saw her appear in the doorway.

"You must stop thinking, Mr. Van Buren. It's almost discourteous. Why don't you do something—play golf or row?"

"I'd like to play Little Jack Horner. I feel like a small child this afternoon. Maybe it's the reflection of your mood."

"Don't reflect my mood. A woman doesn't want a man to reflect her mood. She'd rather do the reflecting."

They sat on a bench by the corner of the porch. The man who had sat there before had put his feet on the railing and tilted back the bench, and there was a half-smoked cigar on the railing. Miss Marlow noted that Van Buren was not smoking. His thoughts must be persistent to have kept him from smoking, she reflected. All at once it flashed upon her mind what those thoughts were.

Miss Marlow had already received a sufficiency of proposals to satisfy the natural vanity of a nor-

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mal girl. The first time she had led the man on, for she was curious and eager to make the experiment of being proposed to, and she almost became engaged to him, so vehement and insistent he was, although she had had no idea in the world of accepting him and only let him go on for the experience. The next man she seriously considered, and perhaps if he had been persistent it might have led to something. But he was not greatly in earnest and did not take his refusal to heart so much as she would have liked. There had been two others, but the novelty had worn off, and it was a strain and some effort. She had to be friendly to them and considerate after she had rejected them. In fact, she felt that they had put her under some sort of obligation, and that was an attitude she did not care to encourage in herself towards anybody. There would have been more than four, but she did her best successfully to head off several others who would have suggested matrimony as a desirable partnership if she had allowed it.

She told Van Buren to light a cigar and smoke, and "you needn't feel obliged to say anything," she added. "I like to sit here and watch the skyline over the tops of the hills. It is restful."

If Van Buren were only more masterful and would compel her to marry him! She would rather be married and have her own home and her own interests. Her father filled part of her life, but that was the only real interest she had. He was a strong, compelling man, and she liked strength and assertion. The first man that proposed to her, an army lieutenant, very young and very much in earnest,

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and wholly impossible, had almost won her by his vehement wooing. But Van Buren would never do such a thing. He was too well bred, she reasoned, too over-educated to compel her love and to take her by storm.

They sat in silence for some time. No one else was on the porch. The sounds from the links, the wash of the water from the oars, the hum of the voices from the tea-table mingled with the murmurs of a summer afternoon. Van Buren threw away the cigar he had lighted and leaned against the railing watching Miss Marlow's profile, her eyes afar off.

"I have a question to ask," he began.

Miss Marlow felt that she knew what the question would be. She could not for the life of her accept a man who began that way. She would refuse him if he kept on, yet she could not help it.

"Don't ask questions, Mr. Van Buren. I never answer them. Questions are all of two kinds, those that answer themselves and those that shouldn't be answered."

"I fear I know the answer to mine, and you need not answer it. I would not ask it if I could help it. Will you marry me?"

"Doesn't that answer itself, Mr. Van Buren? How could I possibly say yes, even if I wanted to? And I don't."

"If you did want to say yes, I shouldn't have had to ask."

There was silence again. The sun would not set for an hour, but the day was gone. The evening clouds began to form around the tops of the Cats-

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kills and to draw a curtain over the view back of the steep Helderberg farms. They sat looking far away over the valley beyond the old turnpike. A club waiter began to arrange a table on the porch for a party of hungry golfers. Miss Marlow broke the silence.

"I've been neglecting my tea-pouring duties," she said.

"A duty invites neglect," replied Van Buren, a little bitterly. "No one prefers to be dutiful."

"I think I'd better be taking you back to town," and Miss Marlow had him send for the horse and runabout. "You are becoming cynical. The customary virtues are good things to have."

"Yes, that is why every one advocates their use by his neighbors."

Miss Marlow drove again on the way back. She wanted to be alone as soon as she could. Van Buren said nothing, and she saw no reason for inventing conversation, so they drove in silence. It was awkward to have a man sitting beside you and saying nothing; but Miss Marlow had started him from his silence before, and this she would not do again. At the Marlow house the groom was waiting for the horse. He had driven off before Miss Marlow and Van Buren had reached the front door.

"Will you come in?" she said, more through force of habit than for any other reason.

"Not now, thank you," replied Van Buren. Then, squaring his shoulders and looking her straight in the eyes, he added: "Let me answer my own question, Miss Marlow. You will marry me."

XXIX



AN BUREN spent that summer like a globule of quicksilver that has dropped from a broken thermometer-bulb to the floor, flying hither and thither without definite purpose, now trying to concentrate his energies and then scattering them in a hundred fragments. Such a manner of life was contrary to his habits and his traditions. It was decidedly uncomfortable and opposed to that poise and tranquillity which he regarded as the end and aim of life. He stayed a week in June with his mother at Schenectady. For her vacation she would drive over to Ballston Spa, which was a watering-place before Burgoyne's surrender, and sit for a fortnight under the spreading trees before the old-time summer hotel which has been for many years a genteel club for refined, elderly ladies of set habits and ancient recollections. That and Sharon Springs were the fashionable resorts of Mrs. Van Buren's youthful days, and she liked them for their growing old with her and fading away in calm content. Usually Van Buren went to Bar Harbor while his mother was at Ballston, and returned in time to drive her to Sharon, where they would sit on the veranda of the old Pavilion Hotel and look across the Mohawk Valley to the peaks of the Adi-

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rondacks. The Richards had a cottage in Cherry Valley, between Sharon and Richfield. Mrs. Van Buren would spend one Sunday with them, and Mrs. Richards would return the visit from Saturday to Monday at the Pavilion. It was easier for Van Buren to fall in with the usual summer programme, and he intended to do so, but there were several interruptions.

In the first place, he did not care to go to Bar Harbor, and went to Saratoga instead in time for the races. There was little to do there except to talk politics and go to the races and bet, and he lost, which vexed him, for he did not enjoy parting with money without an approximate return.

Mr. Coulter, Commissioner Mahoney, Assemblyman Keegan, Judge Murphy, and nine-tenths of Van Buren's other political friends spent their summers in Saratoga and enjoyed the racing and the gambling, their only diversions from politics. Part of his time Van Buren was at Ballston with his mother, but he kept attendance on his political leaders sufficiently to satisfy them of his interest. Saratoga life was distasteful to him, and as the novelty wore off he was with his mother more and more, and finally welcomed the transfer from Ballston to Sharon.

They drove over from Ballston, with his mother's maid and a stable-man their only companions, starting soon after daylight and reaching the Mohawk Valley road in time for breakfast; then on the Mohawk Valley pike to Palatine Bridge, and from Palatine across the valley and up the hills to Sharon. At Sharon his cousin Amy joined them, and he

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spent his days driving Amy and his mother over the Schoharie hills and valleys.

One day, in driving on the Otsego Lake road with his mother and Amy, they met Miss Marlow and her father. Miss Marlow was driving. Everybody bowed.

"I didn't know you knew them," Van Buren said.

"We've always known them. The Marlows have a cottage on the lake," Amy said. "I think she is one of the handsomest girls I know. I wonder why she doesn't marry. She gets lots of attention, but she is so wrapped up in her father and politics. They've come here for years, though we haven't seen much of them this summer."

"Is her mother with them?" asked Mrs. Van Buren. "I have not seen the senator for a long time, but Mrs. Marlow takes an active part in our church matters. I don't think I have met the daughter since she was a child. She is a handsome girl, and I am glad to see her devotion to her father."

Van Buren felt it was necessary for him to say something. "I saw a good deal of the senator and Miss Marlow during the winter. Her mother doesn't seem to harmonize so well."

Three evenings later he rode over and found Miss Marlow and the senator on their veranda overlooking the lake. The mail had just been brought from the country post-office; the senator was looking over the papers and Miss Marlow was reading her letters.

A groom took Van Buren's horse, and he joined the party on the steps of the veranda. The senator welcomed him heartily, and Miss Marlow was also pleased.

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"Glad to see you, Van Buren. I hear you are going to be nominated for the senate?" was the senator's greeting. "You have a hard district to run in. We need you next winter. Let me know if I can do anything to help you."

"Yes," chimed in Miss Marlow, "you must recognize, Mr. Van Buren, that the hopes of the Marlow family centre on you."

"Let us begin the campaign now." Van Buren liked to hear Miss Marlow talk politics. "The senator's advice won my election to the assembly. What has he to advise now?"

"Do you think you can divide the enemy again?" asked the senator. "That is good as far as it goes, but the more territory an independent runs over the smaller percentage of votes he will poll."

"I think the commissioner will have an independent candidate, but that may not be enough. Besides, I got the benefit of some Mugwump support of our President, but this year there is little to draw a man off from his party allegiance."

"Well, there'll be a light vote, and thorough organization does a great deal in off years," advised the senator. "Organization cannot reverse a popular tide, but it can stir up pretty big ripples on a still surface. I'd advise you to spend most of your efforts at getting your own vote out. If you poll as many votes in the senate district as Mr. Hascott did you'll win, and you ran in your district better than he did."

"I wish you and Miss Marlow would come and take charge of my campaign."

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"We'll be in New York a good deal during the fall," the senator replied.

Miss Marlow took Van Buren rowing on the lake. It was a good opportunity to talk to her, but he decided that he had nothing to say yet. He rowed idly near the shore, and at a cool spot where there was plenty of shade he pulled in the oars and sat down on the floor of the boat to use the seat as a support for his back. From her seat in the stern Miss Marlow amusedly watched these preparations for his comfort.

"You are a very self-considerate man," she began, after waiting for him to begin. "You should have looked after my comfort first."

"Oh, you were comfortable already and I wasn't. To him who hath not, nothing is given unless he takes it himself."

"You are so unblushing in your regard for yourself. Most men take a little pains to conceal or disguise it."

"That's not the way with you. The less a man conceals or disguises with you the better off he is. My natural disposition is to surround the sharp corners of life with air-cushions, but you wouldn't like that. You would prefer the natural, savage man with a war-club and a tomahawk. That is what the modern woman requires to balance her mental development, a primeval man."

"Perhaps the primeval man would be a pleasing change in some respects. Do you think the modern man is such an all-round improvement over his ancestors?"

"Not over his immediate forbears, but his man-

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ners are an improvement on Cain and Noah, not to mention others."

"And you don't think women have advanced correspondingly?"

"That's it. Their advance has been much greater than man's—to the cost of their own happiness."

"You mean that men are much happier than women?" Miss Marlow was interested in Van Buren's line of thought.

"Not a bit. The modern woman destroys her own natural happiness, and then takes it out of the man who happens to be around. Down at the bottom of her heart she would rather have man a good-natured, strong brute, but she has educated him until he declines to be what she prefers."

"Why not head a crusade yourself, Mr. Van Buren? You are good-natured and strong enough. Couldn't you cultivate the rest?"

"I think I shall try, and I don't know anybody better to experiment on than you."

"Bravo! Roused at last! When will the bloodshedding begin?"

"Not on a day like this—in a boat on the lake. I think I'll take you ashore and get more political advice from the senator. Between you and him you may make something yet out of this mass of animate clay."

XXX



IN September Van Buren returned to New York to conduct his senate campaign. There had been no question as to his nomination, as Mr. Coulter told the two other district leaders that Van Buren was to be the candidate. Normally the district was strongly Republican. The Democratic candidate for President had carried it the year before with the aid of Mugwump votes, which left a general sore feeling between the Mugwumps and the Republican organization. The Republican senator, Mr. Olers, was a candidate for reelection. He was active in politics, and had taken a vigorous interest in the Presidential campaign, denouncing as voters and kickers all the Mugwumps who would not support the Republican Presidential candidate. This made it easier for the commissioner to repeat the tactics of the year before.

Montgomery, whose independent candidacy for the assembly had elected Van Buren, called a meeting of the Mugwumps of the three assembly districts which composed the senate district, and formed an independent Republican association of the men who were opposed alike to Tammany and to the Republican machine. Montgomery also interested the society women of Murray Hill in the movement,

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and its meetings became more fashionable than their favorite charities. Headquarters were opened in a vacant house between Fifth and Madison avenues. The parlor floor was turned into a tea and reception room, where from four o'clock till seven a committee of fashionable women poured out tea and Mugwumpery. Up-stairs were the men's committee-rooms. The women's committee circulated political tracts, and in the course of their other social duties saw that those tracts were generally distributed at Delmonico's, Sherry's, the Waldorf, the Holland House, and other restaurants and caravanseries of the district. These Mugwump tracts were given, not only to the patrons, but to the waiters, porters, and cabmen.

So popular did the Montgomery Mugwump movement become that Senator Olers' candidacy for reelection was disrupted, and Van Buren began to fear that Montgomery might come in at the head of the poll. The Montgomery campaign had several weeks' start. Senator Olers was renominated next at a Republican convention in Carnegie Hall, where the party battle-cries were sounded and Mugwumpery denounced. The convention to nominate Van Buren was quietly held at the club-rooms on Sixth Avenue. There was as little notoriety given to it as possible. Resolutions were adopted endorsing the Democratic administration of federal affairs and the conduct of the Democratic President, and linking Van Buren's name with the President's by endorsing Van Buren's assembly career in the same resolution.

Van Buren accepted the nomination with a very

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short speech, saying the district had honored him once and he hoped he had not proved unworthy. While Olers and Montgomery conducted an oratorical and literature campaign, attacking each other on the stump and in the newspapers, Van Buren's canvass, under the masterly supervision of Commissioner Mahoney, was quiet and personal. The Tammany vote was over one-third of the total in the district, and if it could be held, and the remaining vote evenly divided, Van Buren would win. More was at stake than the one senator, for there were two Republican assemblymen running for re-election, and a new man had been nominated to succeed Van Buren. The Mugwumps, in reply to the attacks of the Republican organization, had nominated independent candidates for the assembly in all three assembly districts.

The situation made Van Buren's district the pivotal fight for the control of the legislature. In the last legislature the district returned one Republican senator, two Republican assemblymen, and one Democratic assemblyman, Van Buren. The re-election of Senator Marlow hung on the legislature, and the result was likely to be so close that Van Buren's district would decide it. The senator came to New York from time to time to consult with the campaign managers and to keep closely posted on the situation. Van Buren saw him on the occasion of these visits, and the senator's opinion was optimistic. His advice was to hold no Democratic meetings in the district and to make no open fight, but to encourage the general public to believe that the contest was between the Republicans and the

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independents, and especially to promote the belief that the independent candidates stood a good chance of winning, and that votes cast for them would not be thrown away. The rolls of the Tammany committees and the poll-lists of the captains of the election districts gave the names of nine-tenths of the Tammany voters, all of whom were personally called upon, their prompt registration insisted on, and their presence at the polls insured. No attempt was made to gain converts, and the canvass was conducted so quietly that Olers and Montgomery seemed to be the only candidates.

On one of the senator's trips Miss Marlow came with him. The senator was fond of the theatre, and one evening asked Van Buren to accompany him and his daughter. After the play Van Buren took them to supper. The senator left the table for a few minutes to speak to a group of politicians at another table.

"You are going to win, Mr. Van Buren," Miss Marlow predicted. "There is a way of feeling political breezes, and I am a good barometer."

"Your father's advice will be responsible for it if we do," replied Van Buren. "He is always helping us. My election last year was due to him. Don't you think you should begin to repay me what I owe him?"

"Isn't that a little twisted? I did not know I was under obligations." Miss Marlow was slightly puzzled.

"The more any one does for you the more you are entitled to expect. I thought we had settled that a long time ago. Your father is doing every-

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thing he can for me. The only way he can do more is to have you do it."

"But I do what I can for him."

"More reason why you should do more for me. Don't think that I forget my prophecy. The only way to get you to do anything is to make you."

"Break my stubborn will?" She laughed uneasily. "You don't understand women, Mr. Van Buren. We want to be coaxed and persuaded, not clubbed into submission."

"No man will ever win you by coaxing and wheedling."

The senator came back to the table and the conversation returned to politics.

The election passed with little of the vote-buying and none of the repeating which were so flagrant in Albany, Cohoes, and Troy. The Republican organization had an idea that Van Buren's candidacy was not in earnest and that there was a secret Tammany deal to elect Montgomery. They realized the decisive nature of the fight for the control of the legislature, and took every measure to cut down the opposition vote. The district swarmed with deputy supervisors under the control of the Republican State superintendent of elections. These supervisors made up lists of timid Mugwump and Democratic voters and notified them that their arrest would follow an attempt to vote.

When Van Buren reached his polling-place early on election day his district captain told him that the State deputy supervisor would arrest him, and that a list of fifteen others would be arrested if they

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tried to vote. Van Buren promptly went into the polling-place and gave his name and demanded his tickets. The supervisor told him that if he insisted on voting he would be arrested.

"Where is your warrant?" Van Buren asked. The deputy supervisor had none.

"On what charge am I to be arrested?" The deputy supervisor did not know. He simply pulled out a list from his pocket and said,

"Your name is on this list, and I am ordered not to let you or the others vote."


On his insisting, the deputy supervisor reluctantly arrested him and took him to the Jefferson Market Police Court, where he was at once discharged. The next two men on the list followed Van Buren's example with like results. The other nine or ten on the deputy supervisor's list lingered around the polling-place till they saw the deputy would do as he said, and then, not caring to be taken to the station-house and the police court, went away without offering to vote.

Although many votes were lost by this process of intimidation, the result was not affected. To the general surprise, Olers was the low man in the three-cornered fight and Van Buren first. Not only was the senator gained, but all three assembly districts elected Democratic assemblymen, making a gain of three votes off and on, or a gain of six votes on joint ballot. The result in the State was close and uncertain. Definite official returns were slow in coming in. Senator Marlow directed the canvass everywhere through his agents, and when the certificates of election were given out and the official

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roll made up, not without several contests in court, the Democratic majority on joint ballot was two, the three-cornered fight on Murray Hill changing the result and insuring Senator Marlow's re-election barring defection or accident.

XXXI

ITH Van Buren's election to the senate his law income—it could hardly be called practice—took a jump. All the little corporations that had consulted and retained him the year before came around with larger checks and some new pretext for his services. Other concerns that had not called before sent officials, or through their regular counsel threw needless little jobs in his way, and sent checks. They were always careful to send checks, and the services they asked in return were at times almost absurdly disproportionate. A few of them Van Buren refused. He was willing to increase his legal income, naturally enough, and anything that legitimately came in his way was not to be declined; but he would not take tips no matter what their size, and neither would he consent to have a check sent him as a gratuity or purely as a propitiatory offering. It was simply a matter of personal comfort with him. He did not believe he could be bribed with any sum of money that any corporation or interest could profitably afford to offer for his vote. On that score he felt safe. But more than this was the greater consideration with him that he did not care to permit any one else to think that he could be bought.

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To Commissioner Mahoney, who by this time had become his friendly political counsellor, he mentioned this influx of new clients with retainers.

"Turn the small ones down," advised the commissioner, "not unpleasantly, but just because they aren't big enough, and have them understand it. It will get around, and you will take in more in your aggregate fees than if you ran a free-for-all law-office. It isn't the amount of work that a man does that makes a successful lawyer, but the money he takes in. If you are going to stay in politics get up your own scheme—a gas company or a street railroad or something big and good. Be the head of it and take all the rest of us in. That's the only way to make money out of politics. There is nothing in office-holding except as an experience and a stepping-stone. Treat politics the way you would any other business, and get in business for yourself as soon as you can instead of being an employé."

"I don't know what the outcome will be," replied Van Buren. "Last year I was a new minority assemblyman. This year we are in the majority, but it is so slim that accident or death or anything may affect it."

"A small majority holds together better than a big one," commented the commissioner. "I have known big majorities to split with their own weight and go to pieces; but with the senate a tie and the assembly only two majority, everybody will stand in line for self-protection."

Van Buren did not care for another winter at the Delavan. He had learned that the more powerful and experienced senators and assemblymen kept

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house. There was a number of these housekeeping parties in the neighborhood of the Capitol, the two best-known being called the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Seven senators lived in the House of Lords, one of the big, old-fashioned, dignified houses on State Street that imparted some of its own individuality to its occupants. The senators were of both parties and controlled the senate in business matters, somewhat in the way that a college fraternity, although in numerical minority, frequently controls the college politics. The House of Commons included the leading Republicans of the assembly who were returned to the legislature so often that they had settled down to a winter in Albany as their regular vocation. The assemblymen from the cities were usually either dropped after a term or two or became strong and politically experienced enough to look for something better, while the rural assemblyman had as good an office as the constituency of his county could elect him to, unless he widened out to the surrounding counties and contested with the sitting senator or congressman.

Senator Elling, of the Schenectady district, was one of the inmates of the House of Lords. Van Buren had known him for years, as of course everybody in Schenectady did. He was a lawyer with few local clients, and those were people of small means whose fees amounted to little if anything. His office was the rendezvous for all the Republican farmers and district committeemen when they were in Schenectady, a general meeting-place and club-room, with a demijohn in the back room, a box of

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cheap cigars in the bookcase drawer over the cupboard with the demijohn, a stove to spit at, and a circle of comfortable arm-chairs. Among the better social element in Schenectady, the college professors, the clergy, the bankers, and the leading lawyers, Senator Elling did not stand high. His successive re-elections were secured by his hold over the delegates from the country towns and in most of the Schenectady wards. Van Buren in his term in the assembly was surprised to learn that Elling was one of the strongest and most powerful men in the senate. He was chairman of the committee on railroads, member of the committee on finance, also on miscellaneous franchises and on general laws. It was generally understood that he had more to say and do with business legislation than any other member of the legislature, and that, contrary to his custom in Schenectady, he was a high-priced, discriminating man who would not take hold of small and cheap jobs except as a gratuitous kindness, but who had to be consulted on every matter of magnitude.

Through Senator Elling Van Buren was invited to become a member of the House of Lords, and he gladly accepted. It was due to a certain vanity on the part of Senator Elling that Van Buren was given this opportunity, as Elling wanted Van Buren to know that, though he might not be so big in Schenectady, he was a power in Albany. And then he counted on Van Buren in a way repaying in Schenectady the favors shown him in Albany. When Van Buren, on his arrival home for Christmas, told his mother his plans for the winter, she criticised, for the first

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time, his political course, which would lead him to live in Albany with a man whose wife she had never called upon in Schenectady. That omission Mrs. Van Buren remedied at once by calling the next day on Mrs. Elling, who was greatly gratified and knew not how to account for it until she mentioned it to her husband, who laughed and explained.

"The Van Burens may be society swells here, but in Albany I'm "It," and I may as well do the young man a good turn as not. No harm in it; we come from the same town, if he is elected from a New York district."

After his Christmas dinner at home and a stay with his mother over the Sunday following, long enough to go with her to church and sit in the family pew, Van Buren returned to Albany and took up his quarters in the House of Lords for the winter. All political discussion was over the fight for the United States senatorship, and the members of the legislature were arriving on the ground long in advance. The margin was narrow and the Republicans by no means gave up hope. They were to nominate Darius Turner, the well-known head of the Consolidated Cotton Company, who had vast wealth and desired to crown a successful business career by the triumph of his methods in politics personified in himself. He had furnished the immense campaign fund which the Republican organization had lavishly disbursed, and if he had had as much experience in politics as in cotton, or had had a manager with half Senator Marlow's judgment and skill, there was little doubt that the majority on joint ballot would have been with him.

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The result of the election, instead of being taken by Mr. Turner as a defeat, urged him to stronger efforts. Overtures had been made to friends of every Democratic member of either house to secure the absence or defection of three Democrats. It was generally known that any sum, ten thousand dollars or more, would be paid to an errant one. Such large sums were mentioned that Senator Marlow was worried. For one Democrat to fail to vote for him would mean ruin to the man's political future and to his social standing, whatever that might be, but the temptation was great. Through his intimate and delicate sources of information Senator Marlow kept posted as well as he could on what was being done.

There was a Democratic assemblyman named Novek, from a Brooklyn district, whose health had been failing since Thanksgiving. During the campaign he was hearty and vigorous, but it was not long after the closeness of the result was known that he went to bed sick. According to the newspapers he had a hemorrhage and symptoms of quick consumption, resulting from exposure during the campaign. His doctor forbade visitors, but there were rumors that Novek was well enough to go out after dark. His party managers and his district leader had pounded in vain on his door. Mrs. Novek would come to the door herself and ask them to go away and not disturb a dying man. The doctor declined to go into details about his patient's condition. As a result, it was the general belief, in which Senator Marlow shared, that Novek would not be present at the balloting for United

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States senator. That left a majority of only one, a very slim reliance in view of the redoubled efforts of Darius Turner and his lieutenants.

The first evening all the members of the House of Lords were present at dinner there was a general discussion of the senatorial situation. In view of the public interest the members had gathered before New-Year's, although the legislature did not meet until the week following, and Sunday intervened. It seemed to Van Buren that Senator Elling knew a great deal more about the situation than he disclosed. The next day Elling went to New York and returned a day later in a bad humor. He had been drinking, and at dinner he drank still more. The other members of the household went out after dinner, leaving Elling and Van Buren alone.

"Your friend Senator Marlow's beat," Elling blurted out, with alcoholic insistence. "And when I see the kind of man that blanked Darius Turner is I'm sorry for it. With all the money he's throwing away on suckers, he turned me down for a little two thousand dollars that I needed to meet a note I had discounted in Richards' bank for campaign expenses. He knows I've got to stand for him without being hitched. I couldn't take to bed now and have bloody lungs or I'd do it."

"You mean Novek?" insinuated Van Buren. "Isn't Novek sick?"

"Sick? Sick as you are. He's getting ten thousand dollars and his wife five, and the doctor, who's something of a politician himself, is handling the job for another ten. There'll be more sick ones next week, only they'll come higher; and there's

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Darius putting up for it all, and he turns me down for a little two thousand dollars."

"It must be a strain on one's health with such inducements floating around. I wonder how much it would be worth to me to join the sick list.

"Oh, you'd get fifty thousand dollars easy—and think of him turning me down for my little bit." Elling picked up his hat and went out.

Van Buren made the rounds of the hotel lobbies listening to the gossip. The general opinion was that Senator Marlow would lose. There was no possibility of his getting any Republican votes; Novek's sickness was well understood, and there were rumors that a Buffalo Democratic assemblyman and another from Albany were disturbed about their health. The Albany assemblyman belonged to a local faction not entirely in accord with Senator Marlow, and with three Democratic absentees Darius Turner would have a majority of one. An idea occurred to Van Buren. He looked up Elling and found him in a bar-room on Beaver Street, where he was drinking hot whiskies, as he explained, "to warm a heart frozen by ingratitude."

"Come back to the house, Elling, I want to talk to you," and Van Buren induced him to get into an open sleigh. Sobering was a frequent and speedy process with Elling, and by the time he had been driven through the park and back to the house he was ready for serious thinking, although still groaning over man's base ingratitude.

"Elling, you want money and you want to get square," exclaimed Van Buren, "and I know you won't make an exhibition of yourself or me. Get

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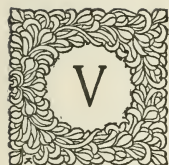
matters in such shape that I'll have the deciding vote. If I'm absent Darius wins and you collect. If I'm present and my vote elects Senator Marlow, I'll see you get five thousand dollars for your trouble. Don't ask any questions; I've reasons of my own."

"I'd like to throw the old ingrate," replied Elling, "but what's the use of a man's doing things for sentiment. I'll go down on the night train and tell old Darius you're sore on Marlow and see what he'll give me if I get you off the trolley. The old man knows I don't talk only to make a breeze, and he'll bite. It 'll be better to play a man like you that's got a game and a grievance of his own than a lot of these sick ones that may weaken on him."

"The fact is, I have my own reasons for wanting to be the deciding vote in this election. It is needless to say that I am for Senator Marlow, only I have my price, too. I guess everybody has his price—not always, perhaps, in the same coin, but we are all looking for the right kind of a bribe."

"I wouldn't put it that baldly," Elling said, wincing. "The laborer is worthy of his hire. I only want what I'm entitled to."

XXXII



AN BUREN had reached a crisis in his life, but, as often happens when a man's rectitude is attacked by an insidious influence, and that in the most subtle way through his ambition, he was not yet aware of it. An overmastering passion had possessed him during these last few weeks, and he was completely under its sway. He had vowed to make Mary Marlow his wife, and then becoming suddenly confronted with the trick of opportunity which a cynical fortune sometimes plays for the better part of a man's soul, he had yielded to the impulse of temptation and entered on the game without a qualm. There was no need to juggle with conscience or honor, for his blind passion had rendered him impervious to the call of both. He judged her as ambitious for power, a woman quick to admire political finesse and diplomacy, with but one deep feeling—her passionate love and devotion to her father. He knew that she was bent on her father's re-election. He had but to tell her that the deciding vote was in his hands, so he argued, and to exact her promise that she would marry him as the price of his vote. He scarcely put it to himself in this blunt fashion; he was not conscious of any exact process of reasoning. He wanted her; she had de-

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fied him; he had said she would marry him, and here was a way to win her. With the suppression of the Buffalo assemblyman the situation was his to command. He had only to threaten to absent himself, now that he had handled Elling satisfactorily, to succeed in his plan. There was no time left for dallying or deliberation; the election was only two days off. He must decide at once.

He called on her the next morning and found her in the little library. The senator was down-town at his law-office and Mrs. Marlow was out. Miss Marlow wore a house-dress, cut away at the neck, and with sleeves that fell back from her beautiful, bare arms as she raised them. Her hair was piled high in a pyramid coil, held in place by one long pin. There was a fire in the grate, and the crackling wood was the only sound in the room.

Miss Marlow did not rise when Van Buren came in nor turn her eyes from the fire. Her head rested on her hand, and the sleeve had fallen from her arm, with the long veins showing from the wrist to the elbow. Back of her ear was a loose tendril of hair straying to the marble of her shoulder. That impish tendril was at once the undoing of Van Buren's purpose and his ultimate salvation. He leaned over and kissed her on the neck where the stray tendril curled temptingly. She did not move. The blood rushed to the spot he had kissed like a fierce blush. He put his arms around her, and, turning her face to his, he kissed her full on the lips.

"Dearest," he whispered.

As her head lay on his shoulder his arm brushed away the curled pin which held her hair in place and

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it fell rippling and tumbling in long waves reaching to the floor, lit with gleams, and made iridescent by the flames from the fire and reflecting its glory in Van Buren's eyes. He kissed her hair and her eyebrows and her wrists and her arms. He ran his fingers through her hair and pressed his lips to the flowing strands again and again. The long pin had fallen on the floor, and he picked it up and restored it to her without a word.

Miss Marlow had said nothing. Van Buren's passionate onslaught had come unexpectedly and passed like a summer thunder-storm. She rose and twisted her hair quickly into a rough coil and pinned it together again.

Van Buren stood before her, trembling with the vehemence of his passion and fascinated by her beauty.

"Dearest," he pleaded, "I want you. I love you. I could lose my soul for you."

She turned and faced him. It was her turn now to look him straight in the eyes.

"John," she said, in a low, even voice that thrilled with a new tenderness which made him glad, "I do not want you to lose your soul for me. I need you, but if you would help me it must be with all your strength and soul." There was mingled pride and pity in her compassionate glance.

At her words he stood transfixed. Had she guessed? Could she know? The object of his visit had been swept from his mind at the first sight of her, but now it was recalled with a shock that brought the blood to his head and overwhelmed him with shame as he saw himself for what he was. A mist

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covered his eyes, and his brain grew dizzy. He saw her put out her hands to him—she was speaking—

“Not yet. Wait!” he exclaimed, hoarsely, as he raised his hand as if to stay her. The next moment he had left her and rushed into the street.

XXXIII



VAN Buren's first thought was for Elling. He had no doubt that Elling would accomplish his errand, though it was a question whether Turner would not buy a few additional Democrats as a matter of safety. Elling reported success.

"The old man would rather be flammed than treated honestly," Elling protested. "He'll give me any amount of money to buy up Democrats without troubling himself about the rake-off of a few thousand I may make; and then when I treat him on the level and ask for a bona fide loan he'll turn it down. Our Buffalo friend is already fixed, but the Albany gent comes high and they'll let him drop. That doesn't exactly give you the deciding vote, but if you do vote it's a tie."

Van Buren went to the official reception given by the governor at the executive chambers, but he omitted the Artillery Ball and the reception at the executive mansion.

At the organization of the legislature everybody was present except Novek, but the Buffalo Democrat who had been bought on the senatorship appeared and voted with his party, making Assemblyman Peters speaker. In the senate the vote for president was a tie. Senator Marlow had arranged

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a little deal with Senator Thompson, a Republican from one of the interior districts, by which Thompson's brother-in-law was elected chief clerk and the Democrats took the other clerkships, the sergeant-at-arms, and the rest of the senate patronage. Thompson would not vote for a Democrat for president *pro tem.*, but offered any time the Democrats wanted to break the tie to vote for himself and let the Democrats elect him president.

After the organization of the two houses the first business was the balloting for United States senator. The assembly met under the papier-mâché ceiling and the senate in its onyx chamber, and they balloted separately.

Senator Thompson voted for Turner with his party, and the vote was sixteen for Turner and sixteen for Marlow. In the assembly Novek was still absent, and the Buffalo assemblyman was also absent. That morning Buffalo newspapers had printed the story that while running to catch a car in front of his house the Buffalo assemblyman slipped on the ice and broke the ligaments of his ankle so that he could not walk. The doctor reported that it would not be safe for him to go to Albany for several days. The vote in the assembly was sixty-three Marlow to sixty-three Turner.

The vote in the senate and assembly being a tie, it became necessary for both houses to meet in joint convention at noon the next day to vote again by joint ballot. The balloting was likely to continue from day to day.

When the "extras" came out that afternoon announcing the result Van Buren was in no enviable

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state of mind. The casting of his vote had made a tie, and so far had saved the day for Senator Marlow, but he ground his teeth when he thought of the part he had played in inducing Elling to withhold the Buffalo assemblyman. He felt that he had been saved from making a terrible mistake, just what he could scarcely conceive yet; but he also felt that something more was expected of him; something must be done or he would lose her altogether—now, when he knew she loved him, and he had forfeited his right to claim her honorably.

Hour after hour that night he paced the floor of his room and cursed himself for a fool. Despair seemed to take hold of him.

All at once an idea struck him, and its first effect brought such sudden relief that he burst out laughing.

Immediately he sought out his friend, Assemblyman Keegan, at the Delavan. He knew that Novek had been given up and that Senator Marlow was relying on breaking the tie by bringing on the Buffalonian in a few days. But that was uncertain, and for that Van Buren would be entitled to no credit.

Keegan was at the Delavan, and as soon as Van Buren stated his plan the two started at once for New York. It was evening when they arrived. Keegan had telegraphed for two of his friends, one of whom was Judge Murphy, to meet him at the station with a hack, and the party started for the Twenty-third Street Ferry. Keegan took the reins, the other friend sat beside him on the box, and Van Buren and the judge sat inside.

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"You're a born politician," said the judge, complimenting Van Buren when the scheme was explained. "I know that Novek. He'll be scared to breathe. I like a job like this."

Novek lived in a modest two-story frame house. His wife answered the door when the judge rang the bell about ten o'clock. She knew Judge Murphy.

"You can't come in, judge," she said. "I'm sorry, but my husband just had another hemorrhage and the girl went for the doctor. The reporters have been calling all the evening."

"Excuse me, Mrs. Novek," replied Murphy. "I'm sorry for any man that's having hemorrhages, and as a friend of his I'm goin' to take him to one of those sanitariums where he'll get cured."

Leaving the horses and hack standing, Van Buren and Keegan followed Murphy into the house. Mrs. Novek started to scream. Van Buren produced a clean handkerchief and Keegan put it in Mrs. Novek's mouth. In the mean time Murphy and Van Buren went up-stairs and found Novek in bed smoking and reading the papers, with a bottle of whiskey on the chair beside the bed.

"Come along, Pete," said the judge. "Put on your clothes and take a drive with us. Fresh air does hemorrhages a lot of good."

Novek began to swear. The judge took him by the arm, saying, "Get up and dress." Foolishly losing his temper, Novek struck Murphy in the eye. Murphy slapped him with one open hand and then the other until his face was red, holding him alternately by one or the other ear. Novek struggled to get loose and hit Murphy again.

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"You're losing your temper, Pete, and getting nasty," Murphy chided him. "What we're doing is for your own good, and to keep you from being a Judas Iscariot and putting the brand of traitor on your innocent children."

His own emotion affected Murphy so keenly that he kicked Novek a few more times while his friends looked solemnly on. Novek was quickly dressed and taken to the hack. Mrs. Novek was ungagged and assured that there was nothing to be afraid of. The party drove to the Grand Central Station. Several times they stopped for drinks, the judge imbibing his favorite champagne, Keegan taking only mineral waters.

A state-room had been reserved in the Albany sleeping-car. When the party got into the Grand Central Station Novek tried to break away and caused a disturbance. Several policeman and the station detective appeared, but one of them knew Van Buren and they all knew Keegan and Judge Murphy, with the result that they kept the crowd away and helped to put Novek in the state-room.

Here Judge Murphy lectured him again. "Now, Pete, be good. I don't like your company much, but you stay with me till you've voted for Daniel Marlow for senator. And, Pete, if you don't do it, my friends here will take you out on the Hudson and drop you through a hole in the ice, and it won't be the first one either."

Novek cowered in the lower berth where he had been put. They took turns watching him during the night, and kept the curtains pulled back to be sure he didn't try to get out through the window.

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From the train they hustled him over to Keegan's room in the Delavan, and from there to the speaker's room in the Capitol where Speaker Peters administered the oath of office to him.

The two houses of the legislature met at noon in joint convention to ballot for United States senator. The roll of State senators was called first, and every one was present and voted, Van Buren answering, "Daniel Marlow." The roll of the assembly began. The efforts to bring on the Buffalo assemblyman had failed, and the reporters and the large audience anticipated a tie in the vote. The clerk slowly called the roll, each member as his name was called rising and saying, if he was a Democrat, "Daniel Marlow," or if he was a Republican, "Darius Turner."

When the M's were being called Van Buren went into the speaker's private room back of the speaker's chair. The clerk called, "Mr. Novek." No answer was expected, and the clerk was going on to "Mr. Nowell," when Van Buren and Keegan appeared, each having Novek by an arm, and, half carrying him, stood in front of the clerk's desk.

"Novek votes for Daniel Marlow," announced Keegan.

"How does Mr. Novek vote?" inquired the lieutenant-governor.

"Say Daniel Marlow or you'll never see your wife again," Keegan hissed in his ear.

"Daniel Marlow," Novek murmured.

"The gentleman votes for Daniel Marlow," announced the lieutenant-governor.

The shouts, the cheers, and the enthusiasm almost drowned the remaining call of the roll. The vote

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was: Daniel Marlow, sixteen senators, sixty-four assemblymen, total, eighty; Darius Turner, sixteen senators, sixty-three assemblymen, total, seventy-nine.

"Daniel Marlow is hereby declared duly elected senator of the United States for the State of New York for the term of six years from the 4th of March next," announced the lieutenant-governor.

That evening Van Buren went to Miss Marlow's house. He found her already in the parlor awaiting him.

"Six months ago," he said, after their greeting, "I said you would some day marry me. As a politician you will perhaps admit I have conquered, but as a prophet—"

"You are victorious also," said Miss Marlow, smiling and giving him her hands.

THE END

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